

THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SUNDAY CINEMAS

BY THE EDITOR.

THE Modernist will not be suspected of Sabbatarianism. For him no Divine Law exists which positively commands keeping of one day in seven for the public worship of the Being, and demands abstention from unnecessary work commercial and industrial undertakings on that day. Yet the Modernist, as a student of sociology and ethics, cannot fail to be impressed with the immense contribution which this institution has made to human welfare, moral and spiritual, physical and social. Christ did not terminate Sabbath observance. He uttered the golden sentence: 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.' By it He liberated the world from unreasonable taboos and inhuman legalisms in the interests of the many-sided service of man. Henceforth, operating for human welfare, is to regulate the observance of the Sabbath. The Sabbath, like the family, and like the Church, is much too valuable a factor in human welfare to be left of its being either abolished or misused. As Modernists demand complete freedom to regulate the Sabbath for this purpose we do not claim freedom to abolish that which has proved of such service to mankind.

On this matter of Sabbath observance long and broad views are demanded—a comprehensive, well-informed policy. It is clear that this is what is being aimed at in many cases. On the one side we have the Capulets who are fighting to break down all Sabbath restrictions; on the other hand we have the

Montagues who are fighting to maintain those restrictions at a cost. The ideal to be aimed at is not necessarily a Continent Sunday nor a Puritan Sabbath. The brighter Sunday ideal and the quiet Sunday ideal have both to be subordinated to the ideal of what is best for the community as a whole.

Will the removal in this case of existing legal restrictions make for human welfare and progress? Ought we to throw ourselves whole-heartedly into the campaign to provide young people and poor people with cheap and attractive amusements for their dull Sunday evenings? Many are quite certain that we ought to do so. Why compel the young people of our large towns to lounge about the street corners on Sunday evenings and tramp the dreary pavements in the rain? How much better for them to be enjoying a cheap cinema in comfort. The cinemas ought to be opened on Sunday afternoons and evenings to meet this felt need of those who have not got comfortable homes.

The plea seems most reasonable, but it needs scrutiny. What is its source? Is it the poor young person and the keen social worker who are making this demand, or is it the purveyors of public and, in many cases, pernicious pleasures? There is an enormous amount of money being sunk to-day in Great Britain in providing sports and amusements. Over £100,000,000, it is calculated, is sunk in horse-racing alone. One undoubted reason for our increasing national poverty is the vast increase since the War in the expenditure of national capital in this way—from the economic point of view unproductive expenditure. This vast diversion of national capital into these channels has created a very large and powerful class, whose economic interest it is to stimulate and gratify a zest for public pleasures. The greatly enlarged space, since the War, devoted to these things in the press, indicates the successful growth of this activity. It is advancing by leaps and bounds. Last week, it is read, 74,000 spectators attended a cup-tie match on Wednesday afternoon at Fulham. The *Daily Herald* of March 5th adds that:

‘The crowds who could not get in and packed nearly two miles along the main road and side-streets were estimated at more than 50,000. Mounted police fought in vain to make way for ticket-holders, inside the ground doctors and ambulance men attended the spectators who were hurt or fainted in the crush.’

ly we have come to the *Panem et circenses* period of our serial history. The colossal amount of money expended on secular pleasures, as on the dole, is amazing in its magnitude. Fortunately it is not quite so large as it seems, for a not inconsiderable portion of the money contributed to public pleasures contributed by the recipients of the dole. It is this national situation which has to be taken into consideration when increased facilities for public amusements are demanded. A zest for exciting pleasures, mainly of the passive and uncreative type, has been sedulously and skilfully developed by our purveyors of these pleasures. It is not surprising that the pre-War English Sunday, with its religious services, physical rest, and anesthetic and social occupations, seems intolerably dull to a populace who have changed their tastes. They have beaten the drum of religion, the drum of the home, the drum of friendly social intercourse, and they have found all to be hollow. It is a pathetic situation. They cannot entertain themselves, although millions of pounds of public money have been spent on their education. They cannot read anything except the illustrated newspapers and the sporting news; they cannot think or engage in rational conversation; the quiet beauty of Nature makes no appeal; good music is tedious; lectures intolerably dull; art galleries and museums ridiculously gloomy. The cinema, watching sports, listening to jazz, provide for them those solid joys without which life is a hopeless weariness.

Is it worth while providing this kind of pleasure for this kind of people, if doing so means the further secularization of Sunday, and the employing of many more people on Sunday labour?

Professor Whitehead has defined Religion as 'what a man owes with his solitariness.' These people cannot bear solitariness: they have no idea how to use it: their education has not taught them either the value of leisure or the use of leisure. It might be better for the nation to reform our system of popular education rather than to abolish the legal restrictions which protect Sunday observance. 'The soul is dyed the colour of its leisure thoughts' is a notable *dictum* of the Dean of St. Paul's. The cinema and the sports-field supply the leisure thoughts of the new educated workless poor. An increase in this stimulus

to leisure-thinking by providing Sunday cinemas and football matches is meeting the situation in the wrong way. We do well to bear in mind Gresham's Law, that 'Bad money drives out good.' This seems to us most improper, most unnatural, most unexpected. Milton's conception seems so much more just and right :—

' But if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.'

Until a people have been educated into the right use of possessions and privileges, they must be restrained by the law in the use of them lest they do themselves and others irreparable harm. We need at present a prolonged period of popular education which will teach a love of what is true and noble and lovely, and will inspire youth to imitation and creative activity. To increase their leisure; to give them more amusement of a worthless, if not of a debasing, kind, is a stupid and immoral way of dealing with the situation. The purveyors of public pleasures have quite enough opportunities of impoverishing their votaries financially and mentally. There is no need for our legislators to add to those opportunities.

We believe, too, that there are a large and semi-silent public who would strongly oppose the deliberate legislative secularization of Sunday. A popular census taken a couple of years ago or so in Manchester indicated this.

We need to-day not to secularize Sunday, but to redeem it. There is always the standing need to make the Sunday religious services more popular—not in any vulgarizing popularizing hunting fashion, but by making them capable of a deeper, wider and more many-sided appeal. Much is being done to secure this needful variety; much more might be done. There is a crying need for a simpler, more varied, modern type of popular service than the Deposited Book provided. There is not the slightest reason why the Bishops should not secure the composition of such a book of alternative and additional services to those contained in our Authorised Prayer Book of 1662. Parliament, we know, would legalise it readily. There would be no Romanizing in it, and it was Romanizing or the suspicion of Romanizing which killed the Deposited Book, and in any case the Deposited Book was much too cumbersome an affair for our really modern, popular needs.

People of good will need to form associations in their localities for providing sound Sunday recreations. Here what is important is that the recreation shall recreate both by its quality and quantity. Youth is equally lacking in judgment and in experience. If it enjoys an experience, it always proceeds to do it, and so loses the benefit of it. There is a saying: 'It is a wise child which knows when it has had enough,' but children are not born wise: wisdom comes by teaching and experience. Legislation often has its use here, not merely as a restraining but as an educative agency. We believe that to be a sound policy which sanctions public recreations on Sunday but restricts their character and hours so as not to allow them to injure the personality or compete with the regular religious services. We hold also that all elements of financial gain should be rigidly excluded from these popular Sunday recreations. In Canada this is the rule. Those who would serve their community must help to organize and run these public Sunday recreations for love. The purveyors of public pleasures desire that there shall be no limits set to their opportunities of exploiting the populace. Vanity Fair was held all the year round. Contributions to local hospitals from the profits of Sunday cinemas are not charity, but bribery. It would be better to get paid. In the providing of sound popular Sunday recreations, there is room for self-denying Christian endeavour. Not a little has been done in this direction. For instance, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and the Boy Scout movement have set a good example, but there is room for much more service of this

We need particularly to restrict as far as possible Sunday work and Sunday trading. We recognize that there are needs of public transit. There are now so many more private vehicles than formerly that public vehicles should be restrained in ply-ing for hire. There are needs, also, of public refreshment. If they were of a simple and inexpensive kind—and this would be secured by making them uniform—the number of people employed to serve the public on Sunday could be restricted. To employ employees an off day on some other day of the week is foolish where they cannot have Sunday, but it is treating them unfairly, and the law ought to provide that they get alternate Sunday off, or at least half of every Sunday. No doubt there is

great room for reform in Sunday observance in making it generally a better and brighter day than it is for many—not least the over-worked mothers of families. On the other hand, Sunday is a much more human day than it used to be. If to enjoy oneself on that day be the right way of using it, there are many opportunities provided for doing so to-day, if one has sufficient intelligence to go the right way about it. One of the good results of the War was the development of allotment gardening. This was much practised on Sundays, and provided a healthy, recreative, profitable use of the day. There are few better ways in which a man can be employed than in gardening. Alas! the products of our post-War system of education seem to have little taste in this direction. Allotment gardening is less popular than it was. Even in the case of athletics, the number of those who prefer, among the young, to watch games rather than to play them is on the increase. The encouragement of good kinds of recreation on Sunday would certainly help to check the moral decadence which is exhibiting itself in various sinister ways.

How to win our countrymen to a more strictly spiritual use of the day is a matter of no little difficulty. Only an ably conceived re-presentation of the Christian religion can do that, and that re-presentation can only be achieved by many-sided experiment. There are many indications to-day that the traditional and mediaevalist presentations are inadequate. But defects are more easily espied than their remedies. When however 'the real Christian thing' is presented, especially by a personality who seems to reflect it, it is always capable of evoking a response.

We would urge, then, in this matter of Sunday observance that we should not tread the *facilis descensus* of secularization but the harder and more profitable road of Sunday reform. The words of that good old judge, Sir Matthew Hales, are, especially if we take them in a national sense, profoundly true to-day.

'A Sabbath well-spent
Brings a week of content
And hope for the joys of the morrow,
But a Sabbath profaned,
Whate'er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.'

FREDERIC WILLIAM FARRAR

1831—1931

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I.

HIS year is the centenary of Frederic William Farrar, who was born August 7th, 1831, and died Dean of Canterbury in 1903. Farrar has rapidly fallen into oblivion, though as what Browning would have called one of the 'people of importance in their day.' His writings were voluminous; some of them like *Eric* and *The Life of Christ* went into forty and fifty editions. To-day they are dead, nor is there any probability of their revival. They are not even likely to possess the historical interest for the student that, for instance, the writings of the great writers have. Two kinds of theological writing have survived, the work of the scholar like Hooker and the literary classic like Newman. Farrar's writings were religious rather than theological. They lacked scientific value and they dated themselves. They scarcely rose above the sentiment and outlook of the day. We are driven to conclude that all his work was written in water and its influence was that of a Voice, which passed with the passing of the speaker?

Mr. Hugh Kingsmill (*After Puritanism*: London, 1929) has found in Farrar a herald of revolt from Puritanism. Mr. Kingsmill belongs to the Strachey school of biography which leans heavily on the fallacy of supplemental imagination, but he has more accuracy than his teachers. We shall come back to Mr. Kingsmill later for what he says is part of the truth about Farrar. On this stage it is sufficient to refer to him as evidence that Farrar was not without real significance in the life of man.

The facts of Farrar's life are simple. He was born in Bombergh, the son of a missionary. He was educated at King William's College, Isle of Man, at King's College, London, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. At all these places he exhibited precocity and enormous industry, and carried off many prizes. But there is no indication that he ever showed himself to be either a thinker or a scholar except in the academic sense. Immediately after

taking his degree he entered on the career of a clerical schoolmaster. He was a master, from 1854 to 1856 at Marlborough and from 1856 to 1871 at Harrow. He failed to be elected Headmaster of Haileybury in 1867, probably because his impetuosity (especially of tongue) frightened the conventional reserve of the governing body, but in 1871 he was the successful candidate for the Head of Marlborough. This school had been steadily going down; no indiscretions of the Head were likely to make it worse. Farrar was only six years Head of Marlborough, but it is agreed both by those who knew him and by the more impartial witnesses who did not know him, that he did not merely stop the rot at Marlborough, but that his school-work both as assistant and as Head was work of permanent value, if not actually the most important in all his career. He brought both to public schools ideals and to the public schoolboy himself a freshness of vision that produced in those conservative preserves what amounted to a major revolution. He was a pioneer of the teaching of science and the supplementing, if not actual displacement, of the old fortifying classical curriculum. In one of his most important minor writings (*Defects in Public School Education*, 1867) he laid down a vital principle:

‘Classical education neglects all the powers of some minds and some of the powers of all minds.’

That principle once admitted, as it had been already admitted by Percival at Clifton, and all higher education was diverted into a different course. The change has taken place. It has been slow. But it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the public school, grammar school, and university in 1860 are barely recognizable in those of 1930. Towards that revolution Farrar did some of the pioneer work.

But the real significance of Farrar in the school is to be sought in a sphere in which assessment is less easy and results are less tangible—in a new valuation of the boy. Farrar was one of the first to discover that a boy was a human being. The official biography of Farrar records:

‘Farrar . . . brought the boys who were in his form (i.e. at Marlborough in 1854) a new idea of life and the conviction that we were made for something better and higher than to be caned or cuffed (*Life*, by Reginald Farrar, p. 57).

there too that we shall find the reason for the popularity of Farrar's school stories, *Eric* (1858) and *St. Winifred's* (1862). These stories are mawkish, if not grotesque, but we might look our analysis of them deeper. We are bound to take into account what Farrar's biographer records :

'The number of simple-hearted lads who have been profoundly touched and uplifted by this book (*Eric*) and of those who have been returned from evil courses and moved to sincere repentance by it will never be fully known' (*Life*, p. 74).

George, later Archbishop of York and a fairly level-headed type, said that *Eric* had been the salvation of his sons. Many letters of the same effect reached Farrar. There is more (and less) in the human heart than we always guess. Mr. Kingsmill is probably right in saying (*After Puritanism*, p. 36) that 'the emotionalism of *Eric* has a certain foothold in reality.' There is a lot of emotionalism at large in humanity. English Puritanism fought a losing battle against it. In the middle of the nineteenth century it broke out as sentiment. Young people were encouraged to busy themselves with their souls, and their elders found a vicarious pleasure in the spectacle. *Eric* is probably a more truthful psychological autopsy of adolescence than *The Boy of Youth*. Like all autopsies it is repulsive. Since the late eighties the veil of games and bad language has once more covered up the heart of youth. Farrar is probably a good deal nearer reality in his emotionalism than English educated opinion would admit. 'The English public school system has triumphed and produced a veritable fear of ever expressing feeling' (J. Langdon-Davies in *The New Generation*, ed. Calverton and Schmalhausen. London, 1930). Those who have not been submitted to the emotion-stifling of the system still respond to Farrar's type of appeal.

In 1875 Farrar was offered by Disraeli the valuable Crown living of Halifax. This he refused, but in the following year he accepted a Canonry of Westminster with the Rectory of St. Margaret's. He learned afterwards that if this offer had not been acceptable he would have been given a higher office, presumably bishopric. Subsequent promotion was hindered, it is believed, by the semi-liberalism of his sermons on *Eternal Hope*, and it

was not until 1895 that he was appointed Dean of Canterbury, a position in which there was little scope for his gifts.

II.

It was as a preacher that Farrar achieved his second greatest work. It certainly was as a preacher that he exerted his most extended influence. He could appeal to many classes. A workingman said of him, 'I can understand that bloke' (*Life*, p. 280). However verbose he might be, he was always lucid. It may be that his thought ran thin. But it is a considerable achievement for a preacher so fond of words to be able to keep clear what he was trying to say. At King's College he had been a pupil of Maurice, that most involved of theologians. Farrar had caught some of Maurice's light without his surrounding darkness. It is agreed, however, by those who can remember Farrar's preaching, that if not exactly bombastic he was, even more than Gladstone, intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity. He regularly prefers rhapsody to reason. Thus :

'Yes, Christ is risen. O how do those words change the whole aspect of human life ! The sunlight that gleams forth after the world has been drenched, and dashed, and terrified with the black thunder-drops, reawakening the song of birds and re-illuminating the bloom of the folded flowers, does not more gloriously transfigure the landscape than those words transfigure the life of man. Nothing short of this could be our pledge and proof that we also shall rise. We are not left to dim intimations of it from the reminiscences of childhood ; vague hopes of it in exalted moments ; splendid guesses of it in ancient prayers ; faint analogies of it from the dawn of day and the renovation of spring, and the quickened grain, and the butterfly shaking itself free of the enclosing chrysalis, to wave its wings in the glories of summer light . . .' and so on.

It sounds like parody. It is a perfectly normal example of Farrar's style. To the exuberance of diction and of poetical imagery he added a passion for quotations and oblique journalistic allusiveness. In two sermons at Cambridge a newspaper calculated that, excluding Scripture, he quoted twenty-eight authors by name, besides others unnamed, and frequently introduced allusive phrases like 'the poor ugly teacher whom the Greek Pharisees doomed to drink hemlock,' a not very remarkable periphrasis for Socrates.

It is difficult to picture a chapel of boys listening in cold blood to this :

‘ . . . but it is not lightly, least of all is it with any desire whatever to answer you according to your idols, if I call it a national blessing that there are two vigorous games to absorb the superfluous energy and occupy the abundant holidays of English schools. The great Duke hardly went too far, who, when he saw the boys at football under the ancient elms of Eton, said, “ It was here that Waterloo was won . . . ” Many of the best men—like Bishop Coleridge Patteson—have been good cricketers and so have been and are many of the best boys I have ever known ; but yet the physical gifts which may make a successful cricketer are not, you must remember, incompatible with—and not once or twice only have I seen combined with—much that is utterly hateful and utterly contemptible. . . . Yes, life is a game ; a complicated game, a game which requires etc., etc. (*Days of thy Youth*, pp. 368, sqq.).

In Philpotts must have modelled Dr. Dunston on Farrar. The same faults of flatulence and sentimentalism run through his most popular work. It began with *Eric* in 1858 and it had disappeared from *The Life of Lives*, the last book he wrote. There is always something good side by side with the worst. *Life of Christ* (1874) is almost absurdly picturesque and as sentimental as Renan, but it has a great deal of accurate background and lucid exposition. *The Life of St. Paul* is even better. Farrar could write a good hymn too, but he could not resist the otiose ornament. ‘ Father, before Thy throne of light ’ (& M. 617), has an excellent third stanza :

‘ Here, where the Angels see us come
To worship day by day,
Teach us to seek our Heavenly home,
And love Thee e’en as they ;
Teach us to raise our notes of praise,
With them Thy love to own,
That childhood’s flower, and manhood’s power
Be Thine, and Thine alone.

But the inevitable touch of the unmeaning picturesque has infected the second stanza :

And as the rainbow lustre falls
Athwart their glowing wings.

It is a gloomy commentary on theological readers to find that the soundest books of Farrar’s never went into a second edition. His Bampton lectures, *The History of Interpretation* (1886) and *The Lives of the Fathers* (1889). It would be a more gloomy indication if we did not know that in theology probably more than in any other kind of literature, popularity is little indication of worth. Books like Drummond’s *Natural Law in the Spiritual*

World, which have had large sales, soon disappear into oblivion. The reason perhaps is that only the superficial can be popularly enjoyed and only the profound can hope to live. The teacher of religion prefers (and indeed is bound) to address the living rather than the unborn. That more than anything else explains the brevity of theological reputations.

III.

There is still another feature in Farrar's career that perhaps has more permanent significance than either his contribution to the Idea of Education or the popularity of his preaching. It is his contribution to a more intelligent and emancipated Christianity. He did stand for a reasonable Anglicanism that was less common in his day than in ours. In the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the Reverend Ronald Bayne says that 'in his religious views,' Farrar 'occupied a position between the evangelical and broad Church school of thought.' This hardly reveals his attitude. Really Farrar could hardly be called Broad Church. He approached religious problems emotionally. It was not so much that he sought to relieve intellectual difficulties. Rather he was shocked at any doctrine that seemed to imply suffering or hurt. The great heresy with which he was charged originated in a series of sermons he preached at Westminster in 1877 on eternal punishment and published with the title *Eternal Hope*. All his argument was directed against belief in everlasting hell-fire in a material sense. H. B. Wilson had presented the intellectual position against the doctrine in *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 and had been acquitted by the Privy Council. But there is a difference between the philosophic dialectic of a learned essay and the plain exposition of a popular preacher. Farrar told the ordinary man in the pew in simple language what in Gibbon's celebrated phrase 'the more learned ecclesiastics' had 'the secret satisfaction of reprobating in the closet.' Farrar differed from the Broad Churchmanship of men like Mark Pattison or even Benjamin Jowett and Arthur Penrhyn Stanley in that his approach was not intellectual, and his audience was the average person. A generosity of heart largely determined his theology, according to the old saying *Pectus facit theologum*. When he was still at Harrow Bishop Colenso published his

serious, if perfectly sound, criticism of the accuracy of the catechism. The Bishop became the most unpopular of all Englishmen. Farrar entertained Colenso at Harrow, and the Bishop was invited, not indeed to preach, but to pronounce the blessing in the school chapel. It is indicative of the temper of the day that several parents wrote to protest and threatened to withdraw their boys contaminated by a heretical blessing. Much of the same generosity made Farrar take the preliminary steps to secure the burial of Darwin in Westminster Abbey and preach a memorial sermon on the Sunday after the funeral.

Although Farrar's first interests were practical, intellectually he was rather in front of current Anglican thought. The Editor of Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* had commissioned him to write on the Deluge. Farrar complied and produced a moderately critical article, estimating the inferences to be drawn from the facts of geology. The Editor hesitated and, hoping to defer decision, temporized by the entry 'Deluge' see 'Flood.' On finding the letter F he was still unable to see light. So he asked a further reprieve by putting down 'Flood' see 'Noah.' 'Noah' had been already written by a more cautious hand, and it was no longer necessary to call on Farrar, and the Dictionary appeared without his views on the Deluge.

Farrar was never very advanced as a Biblical critic even for his day. In fact as regards the New Testament he was definitely conservative. He singled out Reimarus¹ for some very ill-merited reproof, of which the following is but one example :

'The worst harm done by Reimarus was the way in which he pointed out the variations in the Gospel narrative of the Resurrection, of which the post-Reformation system had neither prepared men to see the reconciliation nor to estimate the non-importance' (*History of Interpretation*, p. 400).

The History of Interpretation (Bampton Lectures 1886) is a bulky reading because it is overloaded with facts, but there is to be found in it much admirable exposition of the theory of the scientific method. Farrar quotes with approval Thirlwall's saying :

'If the enquiry is to be free, it is impossible consistently to prescribe its result' (*op. cit.*, p. 376 n.).

Reimarus (1694—1768) laid the foundation of modern study of the New Testament and with remarkable prescience anticipated much of the modern method of approach.

It ought, he said, to be an accepted principle that on many points of Christian theology no final solution is possible, and we ought to be prepared to say, I do not know. Inspiration, he said, meant the influence of the Holy Spirit of God revealing Himself in every great thought and utterance of the soul of man, given the bestowal of every good and every perfect gift (*op. cit.* p. 427). And there is this on Science :

‘What should be the attitude of religion towards those who have enriched the life of man by those superb contributions of advancing knowledge? We know what it has been. It has been an attitude first of fierce persecution, then of timid compromise, lastly of thankless and inevitable acceptance. . . . Five hundred years of mistaken opposition from the days of Roger Bacon down to those of Darwin may, it is to be hoped, have convinced theologians that their teachings are neither infallible nor divine. It is only the foundation of God that remains sure and on that foundation have been built also the irrefragable conclusions of science. . . .’ (*op. cit.*, p. 427).

Farrar served his generation well. Probably he left a reputation with the generation he served. He did too many things. He was for example elected F.R.S. on the proposal of Darwin for his work in philology, another of the interests pursued. Perhaps he wrote too much and thought too little. Gladstone and Gladstone must have done much between them to discredit the legend of the strong silent Englishman. Farrar had a magnificent presence, but it seems he lacked the gift of silence. It would be most unjust to give the impression of summing up against him. He did with singular success what it is given to few men to do. He caught the ear of the great mass of people, spoke to them about the eternal issues, and he made them listen. He was one of those whom Matthew Arnold imagined, cut in the image of his father :

‘. . . Souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.’

CREED-SUBSCRIPTION IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

THE Presbyterian Churches, of both the old world and the new, not only hold the form of Church government which the name indicates, but their doctrinal position is substantially the same. All of them belong to the Reformed as distinct from the Lutheran type of Protestantism, and all of them are founded theologically on confessional statements which derive directly from Calvin's *Institutes*. As members of the 'Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System,' they acknowledge the bond of doctrine as well as that of polity.

Unlike Lutheranism, whose theology was set forth once for all in the Augsburg Confession, Calvinism expressed itself in a variety of credal documents according to the soil in which it took root. Between 1566 and 1599 there were drawn up the *Gallican*, the *Scottish*, the *Belgic* and the *Second Helvetic Confessions*, and the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which formed the doctrinal basis of the Reformed Churches of France, Scotland, Holland, Switzerland and Germany respectively. In the present volume it is proposed to deal only with the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and of England, and to trace the attitude of these Churches through the centuries to their doctrinal standards.

I.

When in 1560 the Scottish Parliament abolished Papal jurisdiction and the Mass, Calvinistic Protestantism became the established religion of Scotland, and the Scots Confession mentioned above was adopted. This continued to be the doctrinal standard of the Scottish Church till 1647, when, not in obedience to any secular authority, but as an act of grace and in the interests of peace and uniformity, it was given up in favour of the Westminster Confession and the briefer and more popular elements of doctrine, also drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, known as the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*.

It is noteworthy—though the fact is often forgotten—that the Assembly to which the Scottish Church, as well as the other

Presbyterian Churches of the United Kingdom, the British Dominions and the United States, owe their doctrinal standard was neither a Scottish nor a Presbyterian Assembly, nor indeed was it strictly a Church Court at all. It was rather a Council representative of the whole country (of England) created by the English Parliament to give advice on Church matters at a great crisis in the nation's history, and it was specially charged to have religious uniformity in view. It consisted of 151 invited persons, of whom 121 were divines of the Church of England and six commissioners from Scotland being present with power to take part in the deliberations but not to vote. In its professed purpose the Assembly was a complete failure, for the English divines gradually withdrew from its proceedings, and though the Confession to which it gave its name was imposed by the authority of Parliament upon the whole of the United Kingdom it only held its place in England for something like ten years. The English and the Scottish Churches went their several ways and the ideal of uniformity was never attained.

The Westminster Confession thus became the Subordinate Standard of the Scottish Church, her Supreme Standard being the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The distinction between the Supreme and the Subordinate Standard is a vital one in the doctrinal position of all Presbyterian Churches, and is well expressed by one authority who says :

'The Church stands between the Scriptures and the Confession below the one, which is its supreme rule of faith and duty, and above the other, which is its own creation, and which it is not only free but bound to amend and improve from time to time, if that be possible, as to make it a more accurate expression of the Church's growing understanding of the Divine revelation enshrined, once for all, in the Scriptures.'

For the first two generations after its adoption the Confession was regarded as simply a bond of union for the Church members, and there was no obligation on ministers and elders to sign it. Later, the idea of it as a test of orthodoxy of the Church's office-bearers emerged, and from 1711 personal subscription was required in the form of words :

'I do sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession to be the truths of God.'

Perhaps in the nature of things that, a test of orthodoxy applied, it should be couched in such stringent terms :

but it will readily be understood that it was equally in the face of things that in course of time a relaxation of the original stringency should be sought. The Confession is a living document embracing matters some of which are less of the essence of Christian doctrine than others, and some of its provisions reflect very noticeably the controversies current at the time of its compilation. It moreover disclaims infallibility, and for the Church to have ascribed finality to it would have been to contradict its own faith in the abiding presence of Christ with His Spirit guiding them by His Spirit into all Truth. There is the further consideration that, as an authoritative document puts it,

‘The system of doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession and the Larger Catechism is an exclusive one, concerning itself mainly with the position and the prospects of believers, and furnishing only a few loopholes from which glances can be taken at the justice of God’s providence and the breadth of His mercy in dealing with all His children.’

In the lapse of time that *exclusiveness* of Presbyterian theology tended to vanish, and with the broadening of outlook developed by the middle of the nineteenth century what the same writer calls ‘a complete alteration of feeling with regard to the documents.’

At that time Presbyterianism in Scotland flowed in three streams, in the Church of Scotland proper, established and national, and in the non-established Free and United Presbyterian Churches. In the first-named the prevailing tendency while abandoning the use of the Confession as a working basis of the doctrines and practices of the Church, to treat it as a historical document ‘setting forth the original basis of Protestantism, liberty of interpretation being accorded in a general way to the individual ordinand rather than the extent of that liberty being specifically defined. In the non-established Churches, on the other hand, there arose the desire to define the liberty both claimed and conceded, a desire all the more natural in that these Churches were under no necessity to seek supplementary authority in making the needed changes. Accordingly in 1879 the United Presbyterian Church, which was traditionally the more ‘nonconformist’ of the two non-established Churches in Scotland, took the first step in reviewing the relation of Westminster standards to the actual belief of the Church,

proceeding by the method of a 'Declaratory Act' which sing out certain specified passages in the Confession and explain the sense in which they were to be understood. One of the most important clauses in the Act was the declaration that the Church allows liberty of opinion on such points in the Standards as do not enter into 'the substance of the faith.' Simultaneously with the passing of the Declaratory Act a new Formula was drawn up, ministers and elders being asked henceforward if they acknowledged the Westminster Standards 'as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures; acknowledgment being made in view of the explanations contained in the Declaratory Act.'

In 1892 the other non-established Church, the Free Church of Scotland, adopted a Declaratory Act which in its main features resembled that of the United Presbyterian Church. Here too, it was stated that 'diversity of opinion is recognized in the Church on such points in the Confession as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith,' the Church retaining authority to determine in any case which may arise what points fall within this description.'

In 1900, when these two non-established Churches came together to form the United Free Church of Scotland, the Declaratory Acts were carried over into the United Church. Candidates at ordination were asked if they 'sincerely own and believed the doctrine of this Church set forth in the Confession,' acknowledging the said doctrine as expressing the sense in which they understood the Holy Scriptures.

II.

Before considering the action of the Church of Scotland both before and at the union with the United Free Church in 1929, it may be well to take a glance at the manner in which the Presbyterian Church of England has dealt with the matter. This Church, though in close fellowship with it, has no organic connection with Presbyterianism in Scotland, having been formed in 1876 by the union of the Presbyterian Church in England with certain congregations which the United Presbyterian Church had planted in this country. In the 1876 Book of Union the Westminster Confession and the two Catechisms

declared to be the standards of the Church, and ordinands required to affirm that they 'sincerely received and adopted doctrine of the Westminster Confession as in accordance with the teaching of Holy Scripture, and consented to the Session as the Standard by which their teaching should be judged.'

This however was soon felt to be too exacting a doctrinal standard, and in 1886 a Declaratory Statement was drawn up stressing the sense in which the Church accepted the Confession, and affirming the same liberty of opinion as had been declared by the United Presbyterian Church in 1879. The Statement however, though approved, was not formally adopted, and became a dead letter, being dropped in favour of the compilation of a 'Compendium of Christian Doctrine,' in the form of twenty-four 'Articles of the Faith.' The doctrinal question of the Ordination Formula was then revised, and candidates were asked if they sincerely owned and believed, as in accordance with Holy Scriptures, and promised faithfully to preach 'the doctrine of Christian doctrine set forth in the Westminster Confession, and now more briefly expressed in the Twenty-four Articles of the Faith.'

This solution proved to be less satisfactory than any that had been arrived at in Scotland, for doubts soon arose as to whether the Articles constituted the irreducible minimum of doctrine to which candidates for ordination must subscribe, or whether they, too, contained matters 'not entering into the substance of the Faith,' in regard to which liberty of opinion was allowed. Accordingly in 1913 a new revision of the Formula was made in which ordinands were asked if they 'accepted' the Session as the Church's Subordinate Standard, 'believing the substance of the Faith therein contained,' the only reference to the Twenty-four Articles being in the Preamble to the Ordination Service, where they are said to 'represent generally' the teaching of the Church and to be subject to the same principle of interpretation as the Confession itself.

But even this has not in recent years been felt to be finally satisfactory, and in 1927 a Committee was appointed by the General Assembly with instructions to 'deliberate and recommend what steps should be taken in regard to the Subordinate

Standards, and by what appropriate means in the present day the Church can record and declare the substance of its common faith.' What is noteworthy in these terms of reference is the second instruction, from which it appears that this Church feels not only the need to adjust its relationship to its historic standards, but a call to give a present-day expression of the catholic and evangelical Faith in its own words. This Committee, over which Dr. P. Carnegie Simpson presides, is still sitting.

III.

To return now to the Established Church of Scotland, which we saw required its ordinands, in the terms of the Formula of 1711, to subscribe to 'the whole doctrine' of the Confession. Though this Church was slower to move than her daughter-Churches the same liberalizing tendencies were at work, and their first outcome was the omission in 1889 of the word 'whole' from the Formula of 1711. Further, in 1905 Parliament gave the Church power, while retaining the Confession as the Confession of its faith, to adopt any terms it pleased in the Formula defining the relation of its ministers and office-bearers to the Confession, and under the liberty given by this Act a new Formula was adopted in 1910 in which the ordinand declared his acceptance of the Confession as the Confession of the Church and his belief in 'the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained therein.'

About this time the movement towards the union of the two great Scottish Churches began to take shape, and with that union in view a set of Articles declaratory of the constitution of the Church of Scotland was drawn up in 1919 and enacted in 1926, in the fifth of which it is stated that the Church has the inherent right

to frame or adopt its subordinate standards, to declare the sense in which it understands its Confession of Faith, to modify the forms of expression therein or to formulate other doctrinal statements, and to define the relation thereto of its office-bearers and members, but always in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the said Confession, of which agreement the Church shall be sole judge, and with due regard to liberty of opinion in points which do not enter into the substance of the Faith.

These Articles were included in the Basis of the Union with the United Free Church which took place in 1929, and effect was

given to the position here taken up by the further simplification of the doctrinal question of the Formula, which now runs: *Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the Confession of Faith of this Church?*

At the same time a Preamble to the Questions was drawn up and appointed to be read at every ordination and induction of a minister which includes a declaration which is worth quoting in full, because it represents the point to which three Christian communities have converged in their assertion of their right and bounden duty to follow Christ whithersoever He shall lead His people, in fulfilment of His promise to guide them into all Truth, and in their refusal to be bound by traditions however sacred and by formularies however venerable:

The Church of Scotland holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, recognizing liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine as do not enter into the substance of the Faith, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret, or modify its subordinate standards; always in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the said Confession, of which agreement the Church itself shall be sole judge.

IV.

This however is not the conclusion of the matter. As we saw was the case with the English Presbyterian Church, the desire is felt, too, in the Church of Scotland, no doubt under the impulse of the new sense of responsibility which the recent Union has created, to give 'worthy modern expression to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, which He committed to the keeping and the witness of His living Church.' Accordingly in May, 1930, the General Assembly appointed a large special Committee to explore the whole subject, with instructions to investigate the lines on which Creed-revision (by which is meant revision of the Church's Confession) might most profitably be conducted. The Convener of the Committee is Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, of Edinburgh, whose own words may be fitly quoted as an indication of the spirit in which the Committee has entered upon its task:

We are bound, for Christ's sake, to state openly and unambiguously, even in our credal affirmations, what the Faith is to which modern men are being invited. A living Church to-day ought to be able to say in plain English what essentially it believes; there is something wrong, intellectually and spiritually, if it cannot and does not.

Its witness is clouded and its work hindered till so grave a fault has been rectified (*Life and Work*, Nov. 1930).

In pursuance of this practical aim Dr. Mackintosh, in addresses to office-bearers at Glasgow and Edinburgh, has declared it to be the Committee's intention 'to repudiate, at least by implication, certain doctrines which many people think to be part of the Church's living and working conception of the Christian Faith.' On its positive side it seems likely that the work of the Committee will issue, not in a full and detailed exposition of Christian doctrine, on the scale of the Westminster Confession, but in a brief but emphatic statement of the Christian message to the world.

G. K. MACBEAN.

THE INFLUENCE OF NONCONFORMITY UPON THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

By the Rev. J. P. HODGES, M.A., Curate of the Parish Church
of Birmingham.

THE Act of Uniformity of 1662 provides a definition of Nonconformity which still remains unchanged on the Statute Book. Dissenters, it tells us, are

'A great number of people in divers parts of this realm, following their own Sensuality and living without knowledge and due fear of God (who) do wilfully and schismatically abstain and refuse to come to their Parish Churches.'

No one would acquiesce in that estimate to-day. Our outlook in some things may still be quite different from that of the Nonconformists; we still find a different value in this point or employ a different criterion for another, but we have arrived at a more dispassionate estimate of their place in the religious world of to-day. From regarding them with dislike, contempt, and intolerance, we have come to speak of them as brethren—even if, as Kingsley reminded us, we sometimes add 'a "in Christ" for fear o' owre wide applications and a' that.' But in that change of outlook lies concealed the history of the influence which Nonconformity has exerted upon the Church of England.

We have always prided ourselves on being able to keep what Sanderson called 'the mean between two extremes.' *Via media tutissima*—but sometimes the extremes are left to do the fighting

While others establish their position with an eye to the flanks. For example, Nonconformity in England has been the bulwark of resistance against all that Protestants have most feared and hated in Roman Catholicism. It has been the foremost champion of those positive principles for which Protestantism has always stood. It has seldom been judicious in the contest; often it has lacked a sense of proportion and has sacrificed perspective to prejudice. More than once it has borrowed a weapon from the adversary's armoury; and for a not inconsiderable portion of its history it unconsciously accepted as its own the very principles against which it was striving. But still, it has always been foremost in attack and, in my opinion, it has been responsible for the most headway. And it is this which has often converted what would have been a relationship of friendship into one of hostility. For it is always uncomfortable to have progressive friends! Frequently, they sound the advance just as you are considering the consolidation of some hardly-won position. And in this sense, Nonconformity has often been a most uncomfortable friend.

One of the great items in the Reformation programme was the demand for a greater measure of religious freedom. In some ways—particularly in doctrine—not liberty but a greater restriction was the immediate result; but in others, a magnificent stand was made, and that it was successful in the long run is due in no small degree to the courage of the Nonconformists. It is a superficial view which dismisses their plea for freedom in matters of conscience as a disintegrating Individualism. Individualism was present at times even to excess, but it was largely the passion for self-expression, thwarted, neglected, and uncultivated, and now gone to seed. The Nonconformists treasured a real religious experience and they looked for a religion and worship which gave adequate expression to this. They refused to recognize the harammelling authority of priest and tradition, less because it was authority than because it stereotyped religion in a way which was inadequate for their needs and experience. The soul that had learnt to come direct into the presence of its Maker could no longer acknowledge any exclusive authority about worshipping in 'this mountain or Jerusalem.' Hence many of the Nonconformist sects—especially the Independents—made a great

stand for *freedom* in the profession of their faith, for liberty to find the most adequate form of expressing their worship and for a discipline not dictated by dead traditions but by practical necessities. As a result mainly of their convictions and courage the Church of England has learnt the two-fold lesson of toleration and comprehension. Not that Nonconformists as a whole advocated a policy of toleration; most of them were more concerned with gaining control of the Church than in seeking favour from it, and most would have agreed with the Presbyterian view that toleration was 'a city of refuge in men's consciences for the devil to fly to.' But their principles logically demanded toleration and the Independents, at least, paved the way by elaborating it as a theory (*e.g.* in Roger William's *The Bloody Tenant of Persecution*) and then accepting it as a definite policy. And if toleration eventually came as a political expedient, rather than a religious measure, the Church did not fail to profit from its lesson and influence.

There is another way in which the Nonconformist interpretation of liberty has influenced the Church of England. It is almost a paradox to say that Dissent has helped Anglicanism to achieve a richer conception of Churchmanship, but there is considerable evidence to show that this is so. Someone has described Anglicanism as 'very charming but slightly invertebrate,' and there are considerable periods in its history of which that would be a mild estimate. If Addison's account, *e.g.* of Sir Roger de Coverley at church can be accepted as at all representative of the age, then we should have preferred a stronger term than 'slightly invertebrate.' The Church of England was the Department of State for Religion. The State decided what religious duties could be required from its members, and through its graded ranks of officers it secured the nominal enforcement of those duties. The squire sat on the Bench at Quarter Sessions or in the Justices' Room in his manor house, and on Sunday he continued his rôle of supervision from his pew in the church. Worship was a State duty, and the parson shared the prestige of the squire because, like him, he fitted into the national machinery. We hear much to-day in criticism of the State-control of the Church, but we have long since forgotten the worst evils of the system. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it came

near to stifling real religion by robbing it of initiative and stereotyping it under the cold aspect of duty and etiquette. That it failed so to stifle it was due largely to the influence of those sects which followed in the main the model of Geneva or yielded to the free impulse of the Spirit.

I note next the influence which Nonconformity has had upon Anglicanism through the medium of its sincere evangelical piety. But, first, I would 'distinguish'! One recalls only too readily the fiery passions of past ages, usually spent in seemingly absurd disputes over mistaken convictions. And this is uppermost in men's minds when they laugh over the eccentricities of evangelical piety. But behind it all there was a real fervent religion often obscured by the dusty clothes of controversy, but pulsing with a life which is as eternal as the Gospel. Evangelical religion has been a bigger thing than evangelical theology. In the latter sphere we owe but little debt to English Nonconformity; in fact, until half a century ago, it produced hardly a single name which we could dignify with the distinction of 'theologian.' Dale comes to mind, but who, nowadays, ever reads his work on the Atonement? The only really great name of the nineteenth century is that of John McLeod Campbell, and how little representative he was of Nonconformist theology is shown by the fact that he was deposed from his chair in 1831 for preaching the Universality of the Atonement! The outstanding figure of the previous century was Jonathan Edwards, a clever, eloquent and forceful preacher, some of whose writings could with advantage be studied to-day; but, if he made any lasting contribution to theology, it was by making men forget some of the bad theology in which they had been brought up. And beyond that, with a few worthy exceptions, principally among the Quakers, we come to rigid, undiluted Calvinism as unpalatable as it was unChristian. Dr. Barnes has recently reminded us that there were points in the Calvinist faith which may possibly come to the foreground again in a coming generation. But its rigid predestination and eternal damnation seem to stamp it a dead creed; and I am not qualified to discuss Psychological Research. However, it had this merit: it bound together those of a like experience and gave them a conviction and courage which nothing could shake. It is probable that few believed the damnatory side of its stern faith,

except as applicable to someone else; only 'saved' men became Calvinists—a fact which may help to explain why Anglicanism remained indifferent when the Presbyterians attempted to produce a Calvinist England under the Commonwealth! At any rate, the late Dean of Winchester was probably right when in his last public sermon he said that in his belief not a single scholar to-day would accept the whole Calvinist creed. The best thing that can be said about Nonconformist theology is that from being very bad, it has become much better, and that the rapidity of its recent progress is an example to others.

But while it is true that the Church of England has helped Nonconformity to slough its theological skin, it is also true that in return Nonconformity has in no small degree passed on to us its passionate enthusiasm and piety. These two sides may be admirably studied side by side in that richly devotional and curiously popular book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. I say *curiously* popular because in it one finds explicit or implicit a theology which even Nonconformists now reject. Who nowadays believes in everlasting torment, the total corruption of human nature, a substitutionary theory of the Atonement, etc. Listen to the Man in the Iron Cage as he talks to Christian. He has, Bunyan tells us, 'provoked God to anger' and so is left to contemplate the awful certainty of 'the bottomless pit of hell' and 'the Judge . . . his eye upon me, showing indignation in his countenance.'

Interpreter. But canst thou not now repent and turn.

Man. God hath denied me repentance. His Word gives me no encouragement to believe; yea, Himself hath shut me up in this iron cage, nor can all the men in the world let me out. O eternity, eternity! How shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity!

But it is not such theology or doctrine which has kept the popularity of the *Pilgrim's Progress* ever green. We have a habit of ignoring a passage in a book, or a point in theology, which we dislike! The value of Bunyan's work—and I take it as typical of what I mean by the evangelical piety of Nonconformity, lies in its straightforward and sincere testimony to a spiritual experience. He wrote as one who had found God and knew what it was to be in daily converse with Him. As Melancthon once said, 'To know Christ is to know His benefits.' And so for Bunyan, the living Christ was first an experience; His saving power to be

ffective had to be personally experienced. Christ was the Loving Shepherd calling each sheep to Him by name and taking an individual interest in them. To answer that call, no system or theory was necessary, but just a glorious adventure of faith in which a person surrendered himself to Jesus and offered his life to be transformed by the enabling power of divine love. It is the spirit of Bunyan's Pilgrim.

'I am for going on. I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into Eternity, sink or swim, come Heaven come Hell. Lord Jesus if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for Thy Name.'

That is what has made Nonconformity so strong and has enabled it to hand on a living faith often in spite of a dead creed. It has insisted first and foremost that religion is a personal faith which, once it is allowed to grip a man, involves a glorious adventure. And it is just that personal religion with its sense of the call to adventure for Christ's sake which has quietly influenced English thought for centuries and has re-vitalized Anglicanism. The Puritan family gathered solemnly for prayer or clustered eagerly round a treasured Bible offered an example which was so effective that it became the national custom amongst the majority of religious laymen. Their prayers may have been ignorant and sometimes unbeautiful; but they came from the heart. As for the habit of Bible-reading which they did so much to spread, it was not always so lacking in discernment as is commonly supposed. Of course they accepted the literal inspiration of the text, as did everyone then; but that at times considerable trouble was spent over elucidating the text may be seen from an interesting book written by Robert Browne—the founder of the Congregationalists—from his exile in Middelburgh in 1582. In his book, he lays down some canons for the better studying of the Scriptures. They are :

- (1) Assurance that the text is not corrupt—to be achieved by 'our skill in the languages.'
- (2) Endeavour to reach the true meaning of the words.
- (3) Hard words must be explained by the purpose of writing—'searche out wherefore such doctrine is showed by such words, if the words be doubtful hard to understand.'
- (4) Seek comparison with other parts of the Scriptures.
- (5) But chiefly, the applying of them must not be forgotten.

Such a standard is by no means an ignoble one even for modern times. But to return to the point, it was this sincere

evangelical piety which left its stamp on English character for the future generations. The Anglican Church, with its dread of enthusiasm, might have fallen upon even darker days than those of the eighteenth century, had not the zeal of the Nonconformists lighted a torch which burned so persistently that its light could not be hid. While Bishops neglected their Sees—Bishop Butler, *e.g.* during his episcopacy, rarely visited his diocese—and divines drawled from formidable three-decker pulpits their theories of duty and reasonableness, Nonconformist ministers were striving to help the uneducated classes to understand something of the life of devotion and of personal religion.

If proof is needed of the way in which Anglicanism was thus influenced by Nonconformist zeal, it may not be an unfair test to turn to our hymns. While one Anglican Archbishop was talking about 'the highly useful and by no means difficult duty of receiving the Lord's Supper,' it was an (episcopally) unordained minister, pacing up and down before his flock, who was trying at the same time to give them in metrical form some teaching which they could remember and also inspiring them to real devotion by the words, now familiar to us in our own Communion hymn, and, perhaps, unacceptable to Modernists, apart from this Nonconformist background.

'Hail, sacred feast, which Jesus makes,
Rich banquet of His flesh and blood,
Thrice happy he who here partakes
That sacred stream, that heavenly food.'

And it is surprising how many of our most popular hymns were written by Nonconformists and first used by them. *When I survey the wondrous Cross*—sometimes described as the finest hymn in the English language and certainly one of the most popular—was composed by Isaac Watts for his little Independent Chapel in London; *Nearer, my God, to Thee* was written by a Unitarian; *Ye holy angels bright* by a Presbyterian; *Hark the glad sound; O God of Jacob, by whose hand; Ye servants of the Lord; O God our help in ages past; Jesus shall reign*—these and many others have been handed on to us from Nonconformity. The rich devotion of some of these hymns shows how far beside the point was that estimate which spoke of 'the squalid sluttishness of Dissenting conventicles.'

THE ELEMENTS OF HUMAN MOTIVE

By J. H. HUME-ROTHERY, M.A., B.Sc.

WHILE the practical rules of right feeling and action that have been built up by philosophers and religions in the past are in the main correct, the theoretical justification of these rules, the view of the universe and their relation to it, has to a great extent become obsolete. As a consequence, the rules themselves have fallen into a disrepute which is largely undeserved.

Broadly speaking, the old view of the universe and man was that the race of mankind was unchanging; that man was placed in a world created by and ruled over by a God who might best be pictured as a good and enlightened Roman Emperor—an emperor who ordained certain definite laws the breach of which was to be punished in the same way as breaches of the criminal law. While the teaching of Christ did not agree with this view, the idea of God as an emperor was so firmly implanted that Christ's teaching failed to displace it completely.

But the other point, that human nature is and always has been the same, it is this that has been overthrown so recently that, while the destructive effect on ethics is evident, little or no construction has so far resulted from it. And such construction as has been done, has been done by those who have been antagonized to all religion by the opposition of many of its professors to all fresh knowledge where that knowledge seemed to them to be in conflict with the dogmas of their traditional theology. In short, that the change of our idea of the universe caused by evolution, the idea of growth, and modern knowledge, have not been applied to ethics as they should have been. In what follows I will try to set down a few thoughts in this direction, hoping that they may have some constructive value.

In these matters I like to start at the very beginning; if not, one necessarily assumes something that may only be true within a limited range. I start, therefore, from the point that all action—including purposive inaction—results from desire: a desire to experience or obtain something, or to avoid something. It

may be something immediate, or in the more or less distant future; it may be for oneself or for someone else, or for an abstract ideal, as to do what is right; but without desire there would be no action at all.

The word pleasure has fallen on rather bad times, as limited to material pleasures; but I am not going to limit it so, and am going to say the motive for all action is the desire for something pleasurable, or to avoid something displeasing. Work for others of the most unselfish character is due to a desire for their happiness, and the fact of their happiness is a pleasure to the worker, as is also the consciousness of having done right. One might use the word desirable instead of pleasurable, but it would fail to indicate the similarity of nature between the simplest physical and the highest altruistic pleasures.

What, then, can be an object of desire? It cannot be anything entirely unknown; or perhaps it would be more exact to say it cannot be anything of which we can form no idea at all. We must be able to form some idea of it, be our idea correct or the reverse, before we can desire it. So first of all we come to the things of which we ourselves have already had experience and have found to be pleasurable or the reverse, and we infer that similar things in the future will yield us the same results. The other class is that of things of which we have had no experience, but of which we have heard from others; in other words, where we rely on other people's experience.

One must not, of course, exclude our imagination, our power of picturing things of which we have no knowledge, either from personal experience or from that of others; but, even so, to build these castles in the air one must use bricks, and these bricks, these elements of our imagination, are things of which we must have some knowledge, and this, as I have said, must come from our own or other persons' experiences. But even in the case of things of which we have had personal experience a limited amount of imagination is necessary: we must remember the past experience and picture it to ourselves in the future, so that it forms an object of desire.

Thus, then, there are two chief elements needed for action: the power to form a mental picture of something and the belief that the attainment of this, if possible, will be pleasurable or

otherwise, and so lead to desire for action. The first element is obviously limited by mental power, which varies greatly with the individual. Just as the mental power of a small child is far less than his power when grown up, so if one considers the powers of different races, or of different individuals of the same race, one sees how different they are. And it is useless to describe an ideal to one who has not the power to imagine it. We are inclined to blame him if his powers are less than the average powers of his contemporaries, but some individuals must be below the average, unless all were monotonously equal. So we must expect as the normal and right state of things, that the motives of action must be different for different people, and different for the same individual at different periods of life.

But now we come to what is the more difficult question, what determines whether something is pleasurable or not? It depends on some relationship between the nature of the individual and the thing, which is quite incapable of definition, and the nature of different persons is different, and the nature of each person changes as life goes on. It is this last factor which causes the greatest difficulty to mankind; when young, personal experience shows certain things to be pleasurable, and one acts so as to obtain the same things in the future, only to find that, when obtained, they are often valueless. Here it is that the experience of other persons comes in; if one can rely on their statements, one may realise that something which seems desirable will not be so when attained, and that something else which does not seem desirable now is really worth getting.

Thus one comes to the conflict of desires which largely dominates life, and one of my chief points in this paper is that this is a conflict between one's own experience and the experience of others. If one relies only on one's own experience, one can have no idea of what will seem desirable in the far future, and so acts for what now seems desirable. When, however, others give advice, that what now seems desirable will prove the reverse, or will prevent the attainment of something far more desirable in the future, it is then that the conflict arises. It may arise on the question whether to trust the advice given, whether the advisers have real personal experience, or whether they are merely passing on hearsay; and then, again, whether their char-

acter is like enough to one's own, so that if true for them it would be equally true for oneself, for one man's meat is another man's poison.

In the development of a race, some individuals will lead the van and be ahead of others to a greater or less extent, and consequently their advice may be beyond the imaginative powers of many of its recipients, or if not beyond their imagination may be so far ahead as not to awaken any response of desire. On the other hand, when not too far ahead it is the experience of these more advanced individuals that enables others to advance. 'Experience is a dear school, but fools will learn in no other'; and it would seem as if the cause of the greater part of the wrong action in the world is that, while at times one must rely on one's own experience against that of others, in the majority of cases wrong-doing results from the failure to rely on the experience of mankind rather than on one's own limited experience.

The same conflict can be looked at from the point of view of sacrificing the present to the future, or the future to the present. The more vivid the imagination, the more real does the future seem, and the more can it come into competition with the present, and as our picture of it can only be derived from others, it really depends on the two factors mentioned above. It may be pointed out that while usually it is the future that is sacrificed to the present, the frame of mind that *always* sacrifices the present to the future is even worse, for when the future becomes present, it will again be sacrificed to the next future, and so on. Consequently nothing will ever be attained to, while at any rate in the other case something desirable was attained to in the present, even if it was only transitory. I do not mean that the present must not frequently be given up for the future, but that this may be carried to excess. When it comes to a conflict between present and future, or between one future and another, the deciding factors will be the intensity of desire aroused by the two.

This brings us back again to the problem as to why something should awaken desire. There are, first, the natural physical desires which are necessary for life, as food, and it is not unreasonable to regard them as developed by heredity and natural selection, those stocks in which they were deficient

ending to die out. Then there are certain family and social relationships, which become more and more important as man becomes more developed and less purely animal, and so the desires that promote these tend to be developed from the same cause. But as this is a later stage of development, we should not expect these to be so firmly implanted as the earlier ones, or to be so fully present in all individuals. But always, before any new class of desire can awaken in a man, there must be somewhere in his nature a germ of it capable of development at that time. Without it, neither his own experience nor that of others can arouse it, though later it may grow and form a part of his being.

It is as a man's outlook expands from himself to his family, from his family to his fellow-countrymen, from them to all humanity, to all living beings, and to the whole universe, that it becomes possible for his desires to extend beyond his own personal wants and gradually to embrace a wider and wider field, and in the ideal end to feel himself one with the whole universe, visible or invisible. Possibly it is because man is a part of the universe that there dwells in his nature a capacity to grow into harmony with it, and that his happiness consists in the progressive harmonization of his individual desires with those of the whole. The ideas of good and evil, right and wrong, mean, should mean, steps towards or away from this goal.

On the other hand however, our practical judgments of right and wrong depend on the average stage of development to which our people have attained, or at any rate the better ones; and so an action which we condemn may not be really blameworthy in the individual, as the doer may be in a less advanced stage.

The only objection to this view that I can see is a denial that the true interest of the individual is also the true interest of the universe; in other words, that truly enlightened self-interest is a right guide to action. Individuals have to suffer for the good of the whole, but unless their suffering is for their own good as well as for that of others, it seems to me impossible to talk of a loving God. Of course it is possible that the Christian view of the universe is not true—there is no logical proof of it. It is possible that the good of the universe can only be attained by the ruthless sacrifice of some individuals; but if

so the government of the universe is not moral and consequently conflicts with our highest aspirations, and we can only hope and trust that these aspirations are a reliable indication of the truth.

A very interesting problem arises as to the relationship between the subconscious self and desire. It would seem as if the subconscious self controlled the ordinary physiological functions of our bodies in a wonderful way, far beyond our conscious knowledge and yet in some ways it is far less intelligent. To give a simple example, the natural impulse to scratch, when an insect alights on one, in order to drive it away is perfectly sound; but the subconscious self seems unable to discriminate and when the healing of a wound (which the subconscious self is carrying out) causes a tickling sensation, the impulse to scratch, though injurious, is so strong as to be almost uncontrollable. It almost seems as if the subconscious self acted on principles which embodied the earlier experiences of the race and goes on applying the same principles when new conditions arise in which they are no longer useful. We have to use the conscious self to remedy this.

The sudden way in which emotions of love or anger or pity and the consequent desires arise seems to indicate that these too, come from the subconscious self and are the inherited results of experience in a less developed stage, and though they are purely beneficial, they require checking at times by our more intelligent conscious selves. It is probably this that has given rise to the idea of the conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh which one finds present in so many religions and philosophies; the conflict really only arising when new conditions come into existence and the subconscious has not had time to acquire the right way of dealing with them.

That much of the content of the subconscious has been derived originally from the conscious, either of the individual himself or of his ancestors, seems undoubted. Any action consciously performed and frequently repeated becomes automatic; that is, forms a stable part of the subconscious; and so, by training our subconscious selves in the right way, we build up a good subconscious self. But whether all its content has been gained in this way is more doubtful. The researches of recent years into telepathy seem to show that telepathy takes place between the subconscious selves of the parties, not by mean

of the conscious self, and so the subconscious self may be in touch with influences which our conscious selves cannot perceive. Very possibly our term 'the subconscious' covers more than one element of our nature, these different elements only agreeing in the fact that none form part of our conscious self.

Our ordinary mode of speaking shows, I think, that impulses and desires and emotions arise in the subconscious though in response to some conscious experience, for the same experience may awaken no response in another person. We say 'an impulse came to me,' or 'I suddenly felt some emotion,' not 'I made myself feel so and so'; and as in the course of evolution the subconscious has gradually acquired new qualities of emotion, each new emotion must have had an origin somewhere. It would almost seem as if this must have originated in the subconscious by its being in touch with something which we cannot perceive, and this then became communicated to the conscious self, and, if approved of and acted upon, it then sank down again and became part of the stable content of the subconscious. Then, this must have occurred at some stage of development of the race, it may be a normal method of development of each individual.

To sum up the main points of this paper. For all action there must be a desire. For desire there must be some object of imagination derived from our own experience or that of others. This object must evoke a response of desire, which seems to arise in the subconscious. This response of desire may be due to past experience, and is sometimes unsuited to the present case, or it may arise *de novo*. And in either case the intelligence of our conscious self can be brought to bear when there is a conflict of desires.

*Wer kann der Raupe die am Zweige kriegt
Von ihrem künftigen Futter sprechen,
Und wer der Puppe die am Boden liegt
Die zarte Schale helfen durchzu brechen;
Es kommt die Zeit sie drängt sich selber los
Und eilt auf Fittigen der Rose in den Schooss.**

* Translation :—

Useless the effort, of its future food
The crawling caterpillar now to tell;
And who can help the lowly chrysalis
To break the prison of its tender shell?
The time appointed comes when forth it goes
And on its pinions hastens to the rose.

ON THE SENTIMENTAL IN RELIGION

I.

SENTIMENT is defined by psychologists as 'an organized system of emotional tendencies centred around the idea of an object' (A. F. Shand). The definition of the dictionary is easier: 'a tendency or view based on or coloured by emotion. Exaggerate the emotion and keep it free from the corrective influence of reason or ridicule and we shall have *sentimentalism* emotion that responds too easily. Sam Weller said of such emotionalism: 'Blessed if I don't think he's got a main in his head as is always turned on.' Mr. I. A. Richards, writing as a literary critic, illuminates the whole subject:

'New emotions . . . easily divert attention to themselves. Very few people, for example, fell in love for the first time without becoming enthralled by their emotions merely as a novel experience. They become absorbed in them often to the exclusion of genuine interest in the loved object. Similarly those who are discovering for the first time that poetry can cause them emotion do often for that reason pay little attention to the poetry. Writers, too, who find they can imagine feelings and express them in words, may readily become fascinated by this occupation as a kind of game and lose sight of the real sanction of the feelings in experience. We may easily work the feelings up for their own sake, forgetting intermittently what the feelings are like, in our eagerness to hang them on to the forms of expression which occur to us. Seeing a chance to make a violent emotional effect we forget whether this is the effect we desire.'¹

Make the necessary changes and apply this to religion. Notice how aptly it fits the abuse of religious feeling which is abundantly popular in England, Wales and America, less so probably in Scotland and Ireland. 'You've read *This Freedom*,' said Mr. Eutychus, the eponymous hero of Miss Holtby's dialogue 'You've read *This Freedom* . . . there's a sermon for you.'

II.

The earliest use of the word 'sentimental' in English literature Mr. Herbert Read says is in a letter (of doubtful authenticity, however) written in 1740 by Sterne to his future wife, Miss Lumley:

¹ I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism*, 1929, pp. 262-3.

'I gave a thousand pensive penetrating looks at the chair thou hadst so often graced, in those quiet and sentimental repasts.'²

Following this example (this group of letters was only published in 1775 and Sterne's daughter has been accused of forging them) the earliest appearance of the word given in N.E.D. is 1749. At that time 'sentimental' had a cant meaning. It stood, says Mr. Read, for any situation characterized by sentiment, which meant any refined or tender emotion, especially those portrayed in literature and art.' The sentimentality of Sterne was not the modern sentimentality, but it was at least its mother-in-law. In Sterne it was held in check by the astringent power of humour.

But before Sterne had published *A Sentimental Journey* the entirely humourless Rousseau had brought sentimentality within the orbit of religious emotion. Dean Inge has given an admirable summary of Rousseau's influence.³ In Rousseau's scheme morality is based solely on pity. Man is always the innocent victim, the State under which he is living is always guilty. This humanitarian morality impressed itself upon the religion of the nineteenth century. In its procession the name of Abou ben Adhem, who loved his fellow-men, led all the rest. The hierocrat at the back of the procession was Tolstoy. The movement brought in its train blessings as well as foolishness. Especially noteworthy have been the growth of refinement and the decline of cruelty.

III.

Rousseau not only awakened sensibility; he gave indirect impetus to romance. In England it was probably in this direction that the influence of Rousseau went deepest. The new appeal both awakened man's humane feelings, and stimulated his imagination. But there still overhung English life in the eighteenth century the Puritan ideal which had been carried down from the seventeenth. The repressed imagination now burst its fetters. The Puritan ideal confronted it. The two clashed, and in the opinion of Mr. Hugh Kingsmill the result was a com-

² It is on p. 11 of the volume of the *Letters* in the Shakespeare Head edition. The whole of this paragraph is derived from the very acute piece of criticism forming Mr. Read's Introduction to the Scholartis Press reprint of *A Sentimental Journey*.

³ See W. R. Inge, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 236, 237, 274 sqq.

promise which issued in the rich sentimentalism that begat Colonel Newcome, Little Nell and King Arthur.⁴ An American critic, Mr. Max Plowman, sees the situation from another angle, and says that the Victorian poets 'wrote under the dominance of churchliness, of sweetness and light, and a thousand lesser theories that have not truth but comfort for their end.' This is a feature that supplements the first. It touches the humanitarian ideal through its quest for comfort and its indifference to abstract Truth, and we are in sight of the point at which Rousseau's disciple will turn for support from the Church of Christ to the camp of Karl Marx. The sentimentalizing of religion leads to religion being stigmatized as 'dope' by the very powers which have sentimentalized it.

Let us go back and pick up the religious thread. How did Rousseau first invade the religious preserve? There can be little question that he did it through Wesley. In France the humanitarian cry led to the Revolution, in England it led to the penitent form. The crowds who in France sang the Marseillaise, in England sang 'Jesu, lover of my soul.' Even robust thinkers agree that the Wesleyan Revival probably prevented a second Peasants' Revolt.

The process profoundly modified all English religion. Puritanism as Nonconformity was as completely dissociated from 'feeling' as it was from sacerdotalism. In that respect it was as 'dry' as the Anglican Church, if not as 'high.' But after Wesley both Church and Nonconformity opened subconsciously to the influence of emotion. Since the early nineteenth century all the factors, religious, social, political, have been deeply affected by the sentimental.

In the religious sphere the surrender has been remarkable. It has taken many forms—the Salvation Army, spiritualism, the semi-musical missions of Moody and Sankey, of Torrey and Alexander, and of Evan Roberts. It has left a backwash in most hymnals, for example in words like Faber's 'Hark, hark, my soul,' and in musical numbers like Dykes' *Hollingside*. It has greatly influenced the type of religious service put together for popular celebrations. The simple unadorned prayers and services of the Book of Common Prayer are treated as though lack-

⁴ Hugh Kingsmill, *After Puritanism*, 1929, p. 14.

an emotional appeal. The last word in this direction I have heard was an attempt (made *ex tempore*) to put more feeling into Paul :

'The loving grace of our dear Lord Jesus Christ and the perfect love of the only God and the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost be with us and all dear to us, now and in all the future and remain even unto eternity.'

The same spirit welcomes the Litany of Loretto and the Devotions of the Sacred Heart.

Sentimental aestheticism runs riot in Anglican churches. Doctrinal extravagances have frequently originated in an incumbent's taste for the pretty-pretty. There are persons who visit church furniture shops as women visit the sales. Consequently the embroidery of the priest's chasuble may prove more attractive to the worshipper than the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and some churches look less like God's house than a doll's house. Even the most admirable is another example of false sentiment—the passion for slobbering which has fastened on St. Francis of Assisi as a fit object and interpreted him through the eyes of Sabatier as a medieval Rousseau.⁵

The typical popular sermon is addressed to an armchair audience. It aims less at inspiring the will than at soothing the feelings. In most of the quarters in which theology ought to be expected, theology is noticeably absent. The clerical as well as the lay churchman is satisfied to be no high divine. The apostles who held that it was not reason that they should leave the word of God and serve tables would be in some danger of finding themselves in a minority in English Christianity.⁶ Not only so, but some of the 'uplift' organizations loosely connected with religion seem to be satisfied with feeding a sense of service rather than with serving. Even in matters where humane sentiment has a genuine task, there is a tendency to lose touch with principle. It seems as mistaken for example to base the claims of world peace on the argument that paints the horrors of the next war,

⁵ A much-needed dash of cold water to this cult may be found in Aldous Huxley's *Do what you will*, 1929. A more subtle criticism is Maestrovic's essay on St. Francis.

⁶ On this see Mr. J. C. Hardwick on *The Father of all Good Churchmen* in *The Modern Churchman*, June, 1930.

as it is to 'support the abolition of Capital Punishment by dwelling on the mental suffering of the executioner.' Both War and Capital Punishment can be attacked on principle. To choose the sentimental argument is to weaken the case. A soft heart is not necessarily more Christian than a hard head. All this and much more indicates that English Christianity is moving more than is good for it on a level lower than the religious one.

IV.

It may be said: 'But why not? The emotional appeal is popular, it gets across, it is what people like and want. Let them respond to it. Abou ben Adhem may be a better Christian than St. Augustine.' The fact that something is what people want or suppose they want is not necessarily any evidence of its value. 'The wants of men,' says Dean Inge, criticizing such a plea, 'are assumed to be identical with their needs.' I think it was William James who gave the answer more or less in the following form. The indulgence of mere feeling, however amiable it may be, tends to create an habitual excess of sensibility or sentimentalism. This inevitably entails enfeeblement of character. James gives the illustration of a doctor and a patient waiting for an operation. If the doctor indulges his sympathetic feelings, he may be afraid to do anything lest he shall hurt the patient. In actual fact he subdues his feelings for the patient's ultimate good. An armchair pity is the probable outcome of sentiment. The will makes no response. Tears, said Sam Weller, never yet wound up a clock nor worked a steam engine. The man who indulges his pity for his brother in the gutter may end, as the Dean of Canterbury says, by blessing the gutter and leaving his brother in it. Religion that is enjoyed in an armchair is an improbable religion. It is the antiseptic that is necessary to preserve life, not the anaesthetic. Said Mr. Valiant-for-Truth:

'I am going to my Father's and tho' with great Difficulty I am got thither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My Sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my Pilgrimage and my Courage and Skill to him that can get it. My Marks and Scars I carry with me to witness for me that I have fought his Battles who now will be my Rewarder. . . . So he passed over and all the Trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

V.

It is the purpose of religion to comfort, but not to make men uncomfortable. That is the answer both to the Marxist who says that religion is dope and to the kindly Christian who fears to unsettle simple faith. Simple faith cannot be unsettled; it can only be increased. What is unsettled is the faith that has admitted elements which debase its simplicity. The weakness of such medieval religion was that it was designed as an escape. Christianity ought on the contrary to be an attack. It is in that sense that no kind of adequate religion is possible without thinking. It is not sufficient to label this remedy 'highbrow' and dismiss it. It is not necessary to pass an examination to qualify for the Kingdom of Heaven. But it *is* necessary for the individual to direct his own will thither, and there is no directing of the will without a thinking mind. The mind that passively receives and does nothing else is the mind that abdicates in favour of the emotions. 'There were many,' says Dean Church in reference to the Oxford Movement, 'whom the movement forced to think, who did not want such additions to their responsibilities.' The pursuit of principles will always be the best antidote to the quest for feeling.

Is there no place for emotion in religion? Obviously there is. Otherwise cold feet will be the inevitable accompaniment of a cool head. The philosopher, Alexander Bain, said of kissing that 'the occasion for it should be adequate and the actuality real.' We need not apply the same ideal to religious emotion. But we can apply a very simple corrective which will balance intellectualism and cure sentimentalism. Mr. Herbert Read in his criticism of *A Sentimental Journey*, already quoted, notices that against Sterne's sentimentality there was a balancing quality of humour, while the essence of modern sentimentalism is that total absence of humour inherited from its father Rousseau. That can be applied to religion as well as to letters.

Excess of sentiment exaggerates man's concern with himself, makes him too ready to pity himself, to see himself as the one object of merit set in a worthless universe, to find himself the one champion of truth in a crowd of charlatans. The tragic poet is always in danger of dropping over the edge into hysteria. Shakespeare accordingly keeps low comedy at hand not only to set off

his tragic figures, but to retain his hold on reality. The ranting bombast which overwhelms a Tourneur or a Webster is the alternative. No man capable of laughing can overstep the bounds of reality.

In religion the sentimental and other inferior appeals are rooted in an undue interest in the things that do not matter. The reply is not only to appeal to intelligence. The reply is also to laugh these things down. You can laugh at the mawkish and the unmanly. You cannot laugh at the sensible and the intelligent any more than you can laugh at genuine emotion. If you do, your laughter, like the 'very loud laughter' of Atheist in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, bewrays the scoffer.

C.R.T.C.

THE KAGAWA MOVEMENT IN JAPAN

THE foreign mission field, we are constantly told, is not only the *growing* point of the Christian Church, but its *learning* point also. It is by learning to solve rightly the problems which it encounters in the foreign mission field, especially in India, China, and Japan, that the Christian Church of the West will gain the power to re-convert the European races to a living Christian Faith. This may be true, yet up to the present it is difficult to point to anything which the European Churches have learnt from the Churches of the foreign mission field and have incorporated into their own Christian life. Our dogmas, liturgies, organization, and ethics are unchanged. Indeed whilst our pulpit and platform orators dilate on the gains to Christian Faith and Life, which must accrue when 'the fulness of the Gentiles' shall come in, it is customary in private to refer to the foreign missionary in our midst as 'a returned empty.' These facts lead us to doubt whether Europe will be won a second time to the Christian Religion by Christian apostles from the East. It is difficult to-day to trace, for instance, the influence of the Sadhu Sundar Singh on our English Christianity—yet he was much admired. If the European Churches are to experience a new conversion to Christ, it will be by movements born within themselves, in the hearts and minds of their own

and not by the impact of forces from the foreign mission field. On the other hand, Christian movements in Asia, the offspring of the efforts of the European Churches in the foreign mission field, will certainly experience profound changes as the result of Oriental reactions, philosophical and devotional.

If it were possible for European Christianity to be converted into an Oriental Christian apostle, Kagawa of Japan seems to us to be the man to undertake it—not that he has any intention of doing so, being much too occupied with the spiritual needs of his own people.

In the recent biography prefixed to his book, *Love the Lord of Life*, he is seen not only as a striking figure in modern Japan, but as a vital Christian. Toyohiko Kagawa possesses the courage and energy of a St. Paul. Opposition stimulates him: persecution uplifts him. But he has more of St. Paul in him than this. He has got to the heart of the Gospel of Jesus, and he has found its heart to be what St. Paul found it to be—the spirit of freedom and love. Kagawa finds his great text in the same epistle of St. Paul as that in which Martin Luther found his—the *Galatians*. Kagawa's text is:

'Brethren, ye have been called into freedom—only use not freedom as an occasion for the flesh—but by love serve one another.'

This Gospel of Liberation and Love frees its adherent from the slavery of sensualism and selfishness on the one hand, and from the slavery of legalism, tradition, and every kind of idolatry on the other. The weaknesses of pessimism, determinism, and asceticism which afflict Oriental religion are absent from the ideal of Kagawa: also the tendencies to lapse into a pantheistic, mystical, unethical theosophy are equally absent. This seems to us very remarkable. Kagawa seeks only the realization of the pure religious ideal, and the pure ethical ideal, and their union—love to God realized in love to man. It is here that Kagawa differs from the traditionalist Christian of every school. Harnack said that what was most remarkable in the religion of Jesus was that He rejected so much that all contemporary religions regarded as essential. To-day there are many indications that Christian sincerity and Christian simplicity are making this primal Christian demand as urgently as

are Christian freedom and Christian love. That question asked at the primitive Council of Jerusalem :

‘ Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear ? ’

is being asked to-day with increasing urgency in the foreign mission field as it is in the home lands—and far too often asked in vain—because as of old the ecclesiastical authorities valued the traditions of men above the commandments of God.

Two other things—essentially Christian—should be noted in Kagawa’s ideal. Although his Gospel is a social gospel, it begins with the individual. It is not in great measures of social reform, which leave the moral and spiritual nature of the individual untouched, that we can hope to find a sure and enduring foundation for social betterment and progress. Kagawa sees this. The only hope for the progressive betterment of the social body rests on the liberation, conversion, and inspiration of the personality of the individual. It is necessary for the Christian movement to begin by concentrating on him. This is Kagawa’s conviction, and he has the authority of all the greatest Christian teachers behind him. Of course this influence does not stop with the individual. It proceeds to transform by many-sided effort the economic, social, and political life of the community, but always in a spirit of freedom and love. There it differs from Bolshevism and other forms of State Communism which become more tyrannical as they proceed.

Whilst a most important aspect of Kagawa’s Gospel is that it is a Gospel of Social Love, yet Kagawa is not a Christian Communist as, for instance, was Leo Tolstoi. The Communist Gospel is the latest device for enslaving a community in the name of freedom. Although many Oriental progressives are enamoured of it, it makes no appeal to Kagawa. He perceives that it is fundamentally opposed to the spirit of freedom and to that social love, which to be true and effective love must be free.

Although Kagawa is bent on creating a new social life and that not on the lines of Lenin, or Mussolini, or Gandhi, or Sun-yat-sen, or Tolstoi, yet he is not simply a social reformer, although he is a social reformer of great wisdom, courage, and self-sacrificing energy, yet he is first and foremost a moral and spiritual prophet. One has summed up his mission as follows

' His *spiritual* emphasis is, " New life through God " : his *ethical* note is " New Morality through God " : his social aim is ' New Society through God. ' "

A Christian Modernism liberated from ecclesiasticism and theological dogmatism, which believes firmly in the sacredness of the personality of the individual, in the sacredness of marriage and the home ; in the sacredness of the fellowship of those who have freely given themselves to God, yet is as opposed to individualism as it is to communism, seems to us to strike the true Christian note of a Gospel of Liberation and Love. If it is not swiftly suffocated or corrupted, or sublimated, this Gospel possesses the promise of ultimately saving mankind.

Kagawa has set out to secure a million converts, and we could not be at all surprised if he succeeds in getting them. Kagawa's Gospel will seem to many much too free, much too simple, much too human, much too spiritual—altogether devoid of ecclesiasticism, sacerdotalism, sacramentalism—to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet a critical study of the Gospels lends strong support.

Ex oriente lux appeals no doubt to the peoples of the Orient : as has its rhetorical uses on missionary platforms, but our practical European ecclesiastics know well that ' West is West. ' They know that in the West we like our Christianity in a form which is less simple and less sincere than in the form it takes in Kagawa's teaching. European Christianity is the Gospel of Jesus Judaized, Hellenized, imperialized, paganized, sacerdotalized, sacramentalized, and commercialized. These manifold mouldings and accretions have provided it with a very solid body, but the pure spiritual and ethical ideal of the original Gospel has suffered loss. Doubtless the Christian moral and spiritual ideal needs a body if it is to carry out its ageing and world-wide mission to mankind—but it needs also a body over which the Spirit has perfect power of control and adaptation. In European Christianity the body has control of the Spirit and exercises that control in accordance with its long historic tradition. We may hope that in the near future the Christianity of Asia will be marked by the liberation from European traditionalism of the primal Christian Spirit, and the creation of a new type of Christianity. So far this has not been

accomplished in the Far East: the Christianity of the Asiatic mission-fields has been a Europeanized Christianity, with the possible exception of Chinese Nestorianism—the history of which is very obscure.

Kagawa's Christianity is significant because it is an un-Europeanized Christianity which has come forth from the primitive Christian source; and up to the present—the movement is very new—it does not seem to have become Asiaticized. Should that fate overtake it, it will be doomed to futility and extinction. Asia has need of a Christianity which is not Europeanized, but it also has even greater need of a Christianity which is not Asiaticized. The record of Asiaticized Christianity is very much poorer than that of Europeanized Christianity. The religion of Jesus is the Religion of Humanity: it represents a higher type than has been attained by the religious evolution of either West or East. Kagawa seems to recognize this. We would commend him to the attention of English Modernists, for he seems to represent that profoundly simple, yet all-round Christian ideal towards which our English Modernism should strive. In Kagawa's Christianity we seem to have 'the real Christian truth'—as old as the Gospel of Galilee and as new as the needs of the modern world.

H.D.A.M.

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRIST AND SIN

All Dr. Dearmer's writings are marked by clarity of thought and directness of purpose. His eagerness and zest infect his readers, while the qualities are graced by a fertile gift of illustration. It is not remarkable that a writer highly endowed with such virtues should in his well-known *Lessons by the Way* have produced a work which in its appeal to adolescents stands by itself. In his little book on the theological conception of sin* he appeals to a wider public. He challenges the theologian in the study, and holds out a friendly hand to the man in the street, for whose position he has a sympathetic understanding.

Dr. Dearmer does not minimise moral evil, 'the blackness of men's sins,' the terrible fact of man's identification with evil; but he does hold that the theology which makes sin and theories of sin the very core of religion, so that 'to many Christ appears only through the mists of theology and iconography as the bleeding sacrifice for sin, has departed far from the teaching of Jesus Himself. He points out that in the Synoptic Gospels there is only one occasion on which Jesus is reported to have used the noun *sin* in the singular, and that the three versions of what He said

* *The Sin Obsession*. By Dr. Percy Dearmer. (Pub. Ernest Benn, Ltd. Price 1/-)

were so conflicting that two of them, if not all three, must be inaccurate. He speaks of *sins*, but the reference is to personal sins and they are mentioned in connection with forgiveness. This phenomenon is the more significant for two reasons. At the time of the compilation of the Gospels the idea of sin in the abstract, as we see from the Epistles, had come to be shaped by nascent Christian theology, and there is no reason to doubt that the general attitude was shared by the Evangelists.

'It would seem, therefore, that the absence of teaching about sin in the recorded words of Christ was not due to any bias in this direction, but to their general faithfulness in recording history.'

The second significant point is that in the current Jewish teaching in our Lord's time the ideas of sin and punishment for sin were central. The fact that Jesus in this respect changed in His Gospel the centre of gravity is therefore of the first importance.

'Many mighty works are recorded of Jesus, though they are never called miracles. But if there be one miracle which transcends them all, it is this—that he was free from the Sin Obsession. In the Jewish scriptures, which he knew so well, words like 'sin,' 'wickedness,' 'evil,' tumble over one another; the people among whom he lived were centred in ideas of law and the infringement of laws and ceremonies, of expiation, of the wrath of God, of punishments incredibly severe—since in theory the punishment for almost all sins was death, and forgiveness was hardly attainable because of God's anger—of works of atonement, of fasting, of the continual slaughter of animals whose blood might plead forgiveness. Jesus put it all quietly aside . . .'

Theologians have built up a theology of sin and atonement, too often grotesque and immoral, largely on the basis of passing rhetorical and aphorical passages in St. Paul. They have made the worst of St. Paul rather than the best. In this unfortunate development St. Augustine played a powerful part.

'The history of theology has, in fact, been the history of the slow escape from Augustinianism, an escape which was immensely retarded by Luther and Calvin, who added the few remaining touches of horror that are absent from the Bishop of Hippo.'

Dr. Dearmer is convinced that the veils which have obscured Christ are now melting away. The Sin Obsession which has held theology in its grip did not save Christendom from the condonation of many forms of evil which the modern man has fought and largely overcome. May not the untheological man of goodwill of to-day, fighting against wickedness which theological forbears tolerated, be nearer to Christ than they?

Dr. Dearmer's little book is a model of arrangement. His argument is clear and his facts effectively marshalled. Its importance is altogether proportionate to its size. It is a big book in a small compass.

G.L.H.H.

THE CHRISTIAN AND WAR.

Professor Heering's impressive plea for Christian Pacifism* was first published in Holland in 1928. It has recently been translated into German, and is now available for English readers in an admirable translation by J. W. Thompson. Professor Heering regards war as an unmitigated rage to which no Christian ought under any circumstances to assent.

* *The Fall of Christianity*. By G. J. Heering. (Pub. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 10/6 net.)

In many ways the conflicting claims of our earthly and our heavenly citizenship create a tension and necessarily involve some measure of compromise. 'Part of the difficulty, sorrow and tragedy of the Christian life is that even where Christian conviction exists, personal conduct, especially of a social nature, and in a still greater measure collective conduct, cannot always be thoroughly Christian, and so cannot always be thoroughly moral.' But he insists that there is a point at which Christian ethic has reached zero and the tension has gone from the compromise, and that this point has been passed when the Christian gives any countenance to war or to preparation for war. He illustrates the difficulty of reconciling earthly citizenship with heavenly citizenship by a quotation from the German theologian, Professor Baumgarten, who, writing in 1915, admitted that 'we have primarily to recognise, however hard it may be at present to do so that the waging of war has no place in the moral and spiritual teaching of Jesus,' and yet patriotically solved the difficulty involved in this admission by demanding a *moratorium* of the Sermon on the Mount.

Professor Heering approaches his subject by way of the problem arising from a dual allegiance to God and country. So long as the Roman Empire was antagonistic to Christianity they hardly existed. With the adoption of Christianity as the State religion they immediately became acute. 'The Church had "conquered" the world, but in the same measure the world had penetrated the Church and therefore Christianity.' In the Middle Ages the cloister provided for the keenest Christian conscience a way of escape from the dualism. This was closed by the Reformers. Luther acknowledged the existence of two orders, the order of grace and the order of creation. In his personal life the Christian must abide by the first, but as a citizen he must abide by the second. As a citizen he was therefore liable to bear arms. The acuteness of the problem created by the co-existence of a dual character in the same individual was in this aspect superficially mitigated by question-begging definitions of legitimate war. As St. Augustine warfare had been justified as the defence of Christendom against outer barbarism, so now it was represented by Luther as the punishment of evil-doers and by Calvin as a struggle against 'armed robbers.' Unfortunately, every warring nation found it quite easy to persuade itself that it was on the side of the angels. It was not from the Reformers but from the Christian Humanists that there came the most whole-hearted protest against war.

'Ye Christians, cries Erasmus, ye anathematize the Turks, as godless, sacrificing to the devil, but ye, when ye attempt each other's life do just the same. For "the devil knows no offering more pleasing than when one Christian slays another."'

He regarded it as sacrilege for a warrior to stitch the Cross on his standard. 'The Cross is the banner and standard of Him who has overcome and triumphed, not by fighting and slaying, but by His own bitter death.'

To Professor Heering the war spirit is inseparable from the progressive deification of the State which followed the rise of nationalism. It is 'that most brutal and fatal expression of the pagan idea of super-moral political power.' It is the logical outcome of the attitude expressed by such phrases as 'Deutschland über alles,' 'My country right or wrong' and 'Sacred egoismo.' It is the apotheosis of the doctrine of Hobbes and Machiavelli. It leads to a weakening of the sense of right and to contempt of justice. It cannot protect, but rather attacks a nation's spiritual possessions. No

the war will be able even to provide material protection for a country, the development of the air arm with the use of the high explosive bomb and the poison gas weapon will expose the territory of every belligerent to destruction.

Professor Heering rightly differentiates between the use by the police of the minimum force necessary to protect order and the ruthless exercise of maximum military force; but it is not clear how far he would approve or disapprove of the extension of police activity to armed suppression of civil and internal revolt. At what point does police action become military action? He side-steps the question by urging that civil war is usually the continuation of ordinary war. Most people would agree that military action would be justifiable in the suppression of armed sectional revolt. Why should that under *all* circumstances armed resistance to *external* attack be justifiable? Professor Heering pooch-poochs the possibility of a Red Revolution, an attack by an anti-Christian power. Others will regard the threat differently.

Professor Heering would doubtless attach little or no value to partial agreement with his thesis. With him it is all or nothing. But, nevertheless, it is probable that the most important influence of his book will be exerted on those readers who are not prepared to follow its author all the way. They may not become Pacifists, but they will be strengthened in their desire for international peace and in their resolve to work for it. It is a challenging book, and we could desire nothing better than that Christians and women of all nations should honestly face its challenge.

G.L.H.H.

OUR EARLIEST LIFE OF JESUS.*

The Rev. Walter Lowrie's interpretation of the Second Gospel is by a disciple of Schweitzer, who acknowledges his indebtedness to Wellhausen and claims an affinity with Karl Barth, but whose own intensely individual outlook dominates his work. What he euphemistically calls 'the personal note' emerges, as he himself confesses, 'more frequently than a modern fashion in scholarship allows,' and is responsible for a portentously bulky volume written in a style which includes a tendency to unpack the text with slang.

These, however, are superficial defects and mask a sincere endeavour to present an interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel which shall not only do justice to the eschatological elements in it, but will, as the author hopes, reveal that vital and fundamental truth of Christianity that the eschatological view conveys. That truth, he asserts, is that the Kingdom of God is something quite different from the ideal of bettering the world by the progressive amelioration of humanity, a task which the writer likens to the building of another Tower of Babel. The Kingdom of God is apocalyptic in the sense that being God's rule it depends not on man who runs but on God who gives the victory. Speaking of the eschatological imagery which the Lord found ready to hand as a medium for His teaching, he says:

'I know of no other pictorial form, and no other form of words, that so unambiguously describes God's transcendence and so wholly vindicates His glory. If we strictly interrogate ourselves, we may perhaps find that here lies the chief reason of our distaste for real eschatology. A mere pantheism or a vague mysticism hinders us from confessing unequivocally the transcendence of God, and our God-*Jesus According to St. Mark*. By Walter Lowrie. (Pub. Longmans, 1930. 20/-.)

almightiness makes us unwilling to give God all the glory. In our eagerness to be helpful in bringing about the Kingdom of God we rob God of His glory.'

We may not discuss the eschatological problem of the Gospels here but we would point out that Mr. Lowrie does not really assist its solution when he writes:

'In fact, the obligation to love our enemies is an eschatological precept. It is part of our fearless living on the brink of eternity (p. 318).

This reminds us of the dying farmer who, having been persuaded by his parson to forgive his enemy, said to him: 'Of course, if I recover this does not hold.' There are moral reasons for exercising forgiveness which have nothing at all to do with the end of the world, whether it be to-morrow or a millions years hence, or whether there be no end of the world at all. Did Jesus not recognise these? Our eschatologists seem to do grave injustice to Jesus as a moral teacher when they present Him as a fervid eschatologist.

Mr. Lowrie, in his desire to present Jesus in a true historical light makes Him appear (in certain cases) very unattractive. Commenting on the healing of a leper, Mr. Lowrie writes:

"See that you say nothing about this to anybody." That was Jesus' usual precaution—usually in vain. Only in the case of a leper was it reasonable to add: "Begone! You were imprudent to come near. The priest must inspect you" . . . Verily Jesus was not a Dissembler! How far he was from being a Liberal' (p. 93).

There is a considerable amount of interesting information in this commentary, but also occasional inaccuracies. Mr. Lowrie writes on p. 551:

'The women could not even start to go to the tomb until the sun was risen because they could neither buy nor carry their spices till the Sabbath was ended by the sunrise.'

Of course, the Sabbath ended with the sunset. This is stated correctly on p. 82, when Mr. Lowrie is commenting on Mk. i, 32.

Though Mr. Lowrie may jar, he is never dull. His comment on Mk. 15, is characteristic:

"As an heir of the Kingdom of God every little child is venerable." We may note that the new interest in children did not show itself early in Christian Art . . . What appealed to the ancients was the drollery of children, and that is what they represented in their art. All pagan art is alike in this.'

H.D.A.M.

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF SACRIFICE.*

The purpose of Dr. Hick's book, *The Fullness of Sacrifice*, is thus stated by its author: 'To show the part which the idea of sacrifice played in the formative period of the Christian religion, and what the content and character of that idea originally were.' This in turn is subsidiary to the main purpose of showing 'that it has been from the gradual departure from the original conceptions of sacrifice that a great part, if not all, of the eucharistic controversies of the last four centuries and some, at least of our present-day difficulties about the Atonement have arisen.' The desire

* *The Fullness of Sacrifice*. By the Bishop of Gibraltar. (Macmillan, 1930. 15/- net.)

The writer is thus to help 'to exorcise the controversial spirit' by so moving the terms and conceptions at issue that the continuance of controversy will no longer be seen to be necessary.

Being that the sacrificial terms and ideas have come down to us from the New Testament, the first need is 'to find out what sacrifice meant in the New Testament, to Our Lord, and to the writers of the books in which we have the record both of His life and teaching and of that interpretation which became the rule and norm of subsequent Christian belief.' Thus the groundwork of the book consists of a detailed and penetrating exposition of Jewish religious ideas, in which, development notwithstanding, the Bishop sees 'a real continuity.'

This continuity is important for the Bishop's thesis, for the antiquity and persistence of the sacrificial ideas would seem to be for him impressive evidence of their permanent value and therefore of their right to a place in a religion whose foundations were laid far back in the Old Testament. He puts it, 'whatever the Israelites did at any stage of their historical development, whatever the prehistoric Hebrews practised, is all part of our inheritance.'

It would be unfair to say that the Bishop belittles the creativeness and originality of Our Lord's teaching about sacrifice, but he would seem to subject them to the freedom with which He was able to deal with the inheritance . . . He is able to go back over the old ground and to pick up what has been lost, or to bring into the light of day what has been over-looked . . . It has been a long road by which the people have been led. At every halting-place there are at once a record of an advance and the débris of what was left behind. He has to secure the whole advance and to recover what is lost. The dry bones must be made to live.'

The question immediately arises not only as to whether Our Lord's atoning work did not consist in something more than making explicit what which had long lain implicit in ancient beliefs and ceremonies, but also as to whether there were not some things in the Old Testament which were quite definitely 'left behind,' and on which, therefore, His Church should also turn its back. In discussing the prophetic attitude to sacrifice, the Bishop sees nothing more than a condemnation of sacrifices offered in the wrong spirit, and even finds in Ps. xl, 6-8, no stumbling-block to his theory. But he does not mention the use made of these verses in the *Letter to the Hebrews*, where the writer plainly takes the view that sacrifices were not willed by God, and that by the act of Christ in fulfilling His will they have been abolished. 'He taketh away the first that He may establish the second' (Heb. x, 9). 'Such,' says A. B. Davidson, 'is the effect of the passage, expressing the will of God backward on Old Testament sacrifices.' The effect forward is that the people of God are justified through the offering once for all of the Body of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Hicks says that that which was done on the Cross was unique, it was all-availing, its merits were infinite, but he does not see in the higher criticism such a transvaluation of Jewish ideas of sacrifice as is equivalent to their supersession. To those, however, who take the latter view the Bishop's making of sacrificial categories as interpretative of the Eucharist and of the atoning work of Christ will seem to pass beyond the limits permitted by the New Testament, and to involve a too exclusive attachment to ideas and terms drawn from an institution which in Our Lord's teaching was so far from being regarded as of pre-eminent importance, was losing its old role as a means of communion with God. Christ's attitude is expressed in his citation of Hosea: 'I desire loving kindness and not sacrifice.'

The divergence here revealed rests on something more fundamental than a confusion of terms, and therefore the path to reconciliation does not seem to lie in the direction in which the Bishop looks for it. Short of that, however, to have narrowed the limits of controversy, by removing such hindrances to rapprochement as arise from misunderstanding and faulty interpretation, is to have performed no slight service. And this the Bishop has done, both by his elucidation of the essential content of the idea of sacrifice and by his exposure of the misconceptions to which it has been subject through the Christian centuries.

One small correction may be permitted. St. Deiniol's Library, to which the Bishop makes his acknowledgments, was Mr. Gladstone's noble gift, not to the Church but to the nation.

G. K. MACBEAN.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE WILSON—HENSON CORRESPONDENCE.

SIR,

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*.

Modern Churchmen will have read with very great interest the correspondence between Dr. J. M. Wilson and the Bishop of Durham, published in the February magazine.

One point made by the Bishop is provocative of comment. In the body of his letters to Dr. Wilson (under date December 24th, 1930), the Bishop states that, in the Deposited Book, 'the Church was making a serious effort to bring its formularies into accord with its actual convictions,' and that 'the veto of the State meant that it was compelled to maintain in its liturgy much which conflicted with conscience and reason.' None, of course, recognised this more clearly than Modernists, but the action of the Bishop in making it compulsory to accept—together with alterations greatly desired by thoughtful and educated Churchmen—reactionary alterations which looked in a Rome-ward direction, such as the Alternative Communion Service, toleration of Reservation (even if only for the sick) at the loop-hole for the introduction of the Roman Feast of Corpus Christi by the sanction of a 'Service of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion,' etc., etc., made it quite impossible for many to accept the Book as a whole.

It was a case of 'take it or leave it,' and far-seeing Churchmen very rightly refused to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

Added to this, the Revision was not nearly drastic enough; much was retained that should have been eliminated, and no principle was asserted by making it optional whether or not the Church should declare that man is to be consigned to everlasting punishment who cannot endorse the statements of the Athanasian Creed.

The new prayers, too, contrasted painfully in their poverty of thought and diction with the beauty of thought and expression of Cranmer's dignified English. The onus, therefore, of the Church's having to retain its services much which—as Dr. Henson says—conflicts with conscience and reason, rests upon the Bishops, not upon those whose only choice was a choice of evils.

How great the evils on one side might prove may be measured by the recent action of the Bishop of Truro, whose influence was undoubtedly behind the more extreme Revision proposals of the 1927 Book—conduct all the more remarkable in a cleric whose monastic vows embrace the virtue of obedience.

EDITH S. STIFF.

THE VISION OF MAX MÜLLER.

My attention was specially arrested by the last sentence in the interesting article in the February issue, 'The Vision of Max Müller,' because twenty-five years ago I spent some weeks in the British Museum studying the *Rigveda* and the *Upanishads*, and the *Gāthas* of Zoroaster. Certain truths had been taking possession of my mind; I felt that they were, as they seemed to be, *eternal*, vital truths, they must have been equally so ages before Christ came among us. I wanted to find out whether earnest souls had apprehended them in past ages: if they were of endless value for spiritual growth, then surely they were not wholly unobtainable then? So I searched the sacred books of India and the hymns of Zoroaster, and I found the answer to my question—'At sundry times and in divers manners' God had revealed truth to those who were true seekers after it. The terms and the symbols were different, but in some measure and in varying degrees the eternal truth was apprehended ages before 'the Light which lighteneth everyman' became incarnate in Jesus Christ. But I gained also a fresh apprehension of the significance of that which lived in Palestine, of the Gospel which He not only taught, but which He was, and is.

Canon Meyerson's lines in *In Memoriam* express what I realised better than my words of mine can do:

*The truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the Name
Of Him who made them current coin.*

*And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought.*

*Which he may read who binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.*

Canon Palmer says, 'No one who has not examined patiently and honestly the other religions of the world can know what Christianity really is; he loses something by not seeing it against this background.'

HELEN ALICE DALLAS.

BARTHIANISM AND MODERNISM.

In my article on Barthianism and Modernism I used the word Barthianism to denote the principles which underlie Barth's thought. It is conceivable that an uncritical reader may be so befogged by the yeasty rhetoric of such writings as the *Römerbrief* as to lose sight of these fundamental principles. If so, it is his own fault. Barth has never hesitated to express himself with uncompromising lucidity. Since the publication of his more systematic *Prolegomena zur christlichen Dogmatik* any shadow of excuse for his might have been before has been removed. Of course, it is quite easy

to quote from the writings of Barth or of those who have fallen under his spell passages which do not express Barth's fundamental principles or are even more or less inconsistent with them. In my article, in fact, I referred to some of the more serious of Barth's inconsistencies. Such quotations may be almost, if not quite, as misleading as Mr. Allen's paraphrase of my quotation from Dr. Rashdall.

Mr. Allen speaks of the Barthian 'doctrine of the transcendence of God and the Word of God.' The word 'transcendence' is here quite inadequate. Barth proclaims a radical *dualism* ethical, intellectual and spiritual, a dualism which from the Modernist standpoint, and, I venture to think, from any reasonable standpoint, is thoroughly vicious. It is to his rigid adherence to this dualism that the fantastic aberrations of his thought, to which I referred in my article, are due. Miss Lily Dougall in untechnical language well expressed the Modernist attitude when she wrote

'Jesus Christ frankly recognised, what all philosophers know, that the attributes of the human mind or soul are the greatest things we have acquaintance with, that we can only get any idea of the infinite good by gazing at the highest good we know, and saying "how much more must this be true of God."' That is what Jesus said all the time.

That is exactly what Barth will not say and cannot say. The Modernist position so expressed is compatible with belief in Divine Transcendence. It is incompatible with Barthian dualism.

G. L. H. HARVEY.

Earley Vicarage, Reading.

SIR,

MIRACLE IN CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC.

I have no wish for mere verbal debate, but the centrality of this miracle issue in modern theology and the widespread confusion of thought which despite our best endeavours, seems to doom all such discussions lead me to ask your further indulgence.

(1) By an omission of certain words from a sentence in my previous letter it was rendered meaningless. What I wrote was: 'To me the Divine activity suggested by the whole emergent or epigenetic evolutionary process does *not* suggest a Divine activity *distinguishable from the Divine activity* which characterises the constant and unbroken operation of particular laws.'

(2) When I referred in my letter to the 'operation of particular laws' (a phrase quoted from Mr. Bezzant's review), and to 'those processes left to themselves,' I took it for granted that the context sufficiently indicated that these phrases expressed a position *which I do not accept*. There is no God-forsaken Nature. To my view, so to declare is to 'grudge God His own universe.' In the order of Nature we are tracing the order of God. It is His universe and His Order, and it can subserve His ends. Some, whether in the interests of a *deistic* theism or of an *a priori* concept of Evil, may wish to ascribe to Nature a 'delegated' activity in contrast to the immediate and direct activity in Miracles. There I do not see my way to follow. I certainly, with Mr. Bezzant, think evil of evil. I hope I feel as intensely as others the evil of a New Zealand earthquake, of a bacillus battenning on the brain of a thinker or on the heart of a saint, of people like ourselves who in every age crucify 'the self-spending children of the dawn.' But you do not make these problems any easier by having recourse

to a two-fold activity of God in Nature or to an *absolute* free-will of which indeed does not exist). God is the Ground of the *whole* universe, and if any power has been 'delegated' it is *He* who has done it.

The words 'supernatural' and 'natural.' The former I regard as a word of philosophic *interpretation* and of religious *faith*, the latter as a *descriptive* word. Both are therefore necessary.

When in my treatise I say that 'God acts *immediately* in His world,' I mean to say what I mean—that God has His own immediate ends—that He does them all the time, and not just spasmodically or sporadically. He does not 'intervene' here, and not there. 'Not a sparrow falls'! All's well with Matter and Mind—and, as I venture to believe, Love.

C. J. WRIGHT.

University College, Manchester.

March 1st, 1931.

MR. BEZZANT'S REPLY.

I wish Mr. Wright would do me the honour of attending to the specific objections which I have advanced against the actual case he has stated. Instead of doing so, he merely asserts that there are difficulties in what, I have gratuitously and on the basis of a paragraph or so, he infers to be his own theodicy.

The meaningless sentence in Mr. Wright's last letter I understood to mean exactly what it says in its corrected form. Whether the constant activity we call gravitation be an instance of God's 'all-the-time interference' or an instance of an autonomous natural law, it appears to me equally distinguishable from that activity (however it be described) by the fact that many constant activities similar to gravitation are maintained as an ordered cosmos characterized by epigenesis. If Mr. Wright were to argue that they are not really distinguishable, but are *one* activity, he would be arguing for what, at most, is theoretically possible; and in such arguments he has himself professed no confidence. His inability to recognize such a distinction is partly responsible for the confusion in the philosophical treatment of his book.

He also uses the word 'supernatural' for an interpretative hypothesis which requires the word 'natural' to describe what it interprets seems to me to be mere playing with words.* If the historic words mean no more than this, it is absurd to say that they are 'necessary': they are simply misleading. The useful question is, What realities correspond to the words? Mr. Wright's explanation simply makes more explicit what I deduced from his explanation—viz. that 'natural' in his usage has been emptied of all factual content.

It is Mr. Wright's own theory which 'grudges God His own universe.' It allows no *cosmos*: there is simply a collection of inert somethings in which God directly operates. The idea of 'delegated autonomy' is asserted in the interests of any theory whatsoever except that of *theism*: it is an inevitable conception if God creates. For a created person acting must, by the fact of being created, be in some sense independent of God, however dependent on His will, even for its independence. That is the 'existence' of anything other than God means, and without it there can be no distinction between the existence and the non-existence of anything, except God. The clearest instance of delegated autonomy is human freedom. Our knowledge of our freedom is more immediate than

is any of the knowledge which is sometimes employed to deny it. No one in his senses claims that human freedom is absolute; but Mr. Wright's theory that *all* causation is simply the direct and immediate action of God destroys *all* human freedom. Of course Theism implies that God is responsible for delegating autonomy: He is responsible for whatever degree of freedom I may have. But the very fact that He has delegated it makes it an entirely different thing to assert that He is directly responsible for, and directly active in, my misuse of my freedom.

I cannot conceive how human intelligence, initiative, and moral life could develop if there were not *at least* a relatively settled order of nature; but I find it equally impossible to conceive how such a cosmos as the only one of which we have partial knowledge could exist without the possibility of calamity. It is as easy and natural to feel that calamities ought not to be, as it is difficult to delineate a cosmos in which they could not occur which should *also* be capable of developing that intelligent and moral life which we recognize as the greatest good. If the cosmos has a delegated autonomy of which human life affords the clearest example, there is a very real distinction between saying that God wills the cosmos as such and its greatest good—even though these cannot be without the occurrence of calamities—and saying that God directly wills, and even directly causes, the calamities. If 'a bacillus battenning on the brain of a thinker,' and an earthquake, are due simply to the direct, immediate activity of the ultimate Power, they are the acts of a devil, and not of any God whom it is possible, right or desirable to worship.

Moreover, Mr. Wright's theory is self-defeating. If the only causation is the direct, immediate and all-the-time interference of God, there can be no such thing as natural law at all: there is simply an infinitely complicated series of fiats and immediate acts of God. And as Mr. Wright *asserts* the transcendence of God, it follows that His ways must be largely unknown to us, and that there is no longer any ground at all on which any alleged miracle can, or ought to be, denied as such. There is no natural law to raise a presumption against it, and if there is *any* good evidence for it, there is nothing to set against its miraculous character, for there is nothing but miracle, except a relatively settled order of miracles! The fearful price which Mr. Wright's theory demands that we pay for the elimination of *miracula* does not eliminate them: we are, in fact, back in pre-scientific superstition. And if God is the only direct cause of all evil and disease, ought we not to cease to fight them, lest *certainly* we be found to fight even against God? But, of course, the theory means that God is fighting Himself, not very successfully! Mr. Wright's theory, which, be it noted, is not *forced* upon us by anything that can be called knowledge, cannot in practice be distinguished from Pantheism, and reduces the Divine activity to relative impotence or to a contemptible farce. If, in spite of his theory and its clear implications, he believes that 'All's Love,' one may marvel at the exuberance of his faith; but the trouble is that every superstition which has enslaved mankind could be justified by an appeal to the same kind of faith.

J. S. BEZZANT.

* Just as the sentence on p. 256 of Mr. Wright's book—'The *cause* of an event is our interpretation and not our description thereof'—says nothing relevant to the question as to whether *cause* is really *there* in the antecedents of an event or not. 'Can it be,' says Mr. Wright, in a phrase of Wendland's, 'that *any* event is implicit in the existing state of the world?' and replies, 'No event, surely, can be said to be implicit in past events. He doesn't see that his change of wording begs the whole question. If any event is wholly or partially implicit in its antecedents, it is not because those antecedents are mere events but because they are events in a *world* or *cosmos*.'